

Islam, Nationalism and the Mission of Arab Journalism

A SURVEY OF ATTITUDES TOWARD RELIGION, POLITICS AND THE ROLE OF ARAB
MEDIA IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

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Submitted to the University of Wales in fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

University of Wales, Lampeter

2008

ABSTRACT

The Bush administration has charged that reporters at Al-Jazeera and other Arab media outlets are biased against the US. Whether or not such an allegation is true, it raises the central question of what influences are at work on Arab journalists at this crucial time of turmoil in the region and change in Arab media. What are their core values? To what degree do religious beliefs and ethno-nationalist attitudes shape their coverage? How do they view US policy and other regional and international issues? What do they define as the role of a journalist in the modern Arab and/or Islamic worlds? This study analyzes the responses of 517 Arab journalists who participated in the first broad, regional survey examining attitudes and values. It found that Arab journalists see the achievement of political and social change as the prime mission of Arab journalism and cited “democrat” as their primary political identity. When the views of self-declared “secular” and “religious” Muslim journalists were compared, there was little statistical difference in their attitudes on all but issues related to the role of clerics in Arab society.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis was made possible by grants from the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, the Howard R. Marsh Foundation, and the Center for Middle East and North African Studies at the University of Michigan. The initial planning for the survey at the heart of the dissertation began while I held the chair as Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor of Journalism at that university. My appreciation to Michael Traugott, the department chair who hired me for the position and who arranged additional support for the project from the Marsh fund; his successor Susan Douglas, who has always been supportive; my good friend and colleague Marsha Inhorn, then director of CMENAS, who helped arrange a small grant from the Center; and Priscilla Lewis, then program director at the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, who saw merit in the project and was understanding when then original focus shifted dramatically.

Thanks also to my colleague Jeremy Ginges, PhD of The New School in New York, who provided invaluable assistance in vetting the survey tool for methodological soundness and providing ongoing advice. Thanks to news executives Ahmed Sheikh at Al-Jazeera, Nabil Khatib at Al-Arabiya, Abdulwahab Badrakhan, formerly of *Al-Hayat*, Othman Mirghany of *Asharq al-Awsat*, Abdel Bari Atwan of *Al-Quds l-Awsat*, and George Hishmeh of the Washington Arab Journalists Association, all of whom gave their imprimaturs to the project. Finally, I want to acknowledge the important role played by the Arab journalist/researchers who administered the survey in the field. Usama Najeeb, my Egyptian research assistant did yeoman's work in both editing the original translations and in administering the survey in Egypt and the UAE. He also helped assemble a team of young journalists in the Levant and North Africa who were able to reach out to colleagues in a way this foreign researcher would never have been able. And finally, of course, to my dissertation advisor, Dr. Gary Bunt, who help this aging war correspondent navigate the treacherous shoals of academia.

TRANSLITERATION

All Qur'anic translations are taken from *The Glorious Qur'an* translated by Abdallah Yusuf Ali.¹

Presentation of Arabic words and names generally follows the guidelines of the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, which is based on a modified version of *Encyclopedia of Islam*, though citations will follow the original. Nothing was directly translated from Arabic for this work.

Where possible, the names of individuals are presented in English as they themselves spell them, but as those familiar with the Arab world will be aware, even this is not always consistent, so the prevailing spelling has been chosen. On the equally-complicated issue of the names of news organizations, all newspapers and television channels are presented with an uppercase "A" in "Al" and a hyphen, as in Al-Jazeera, with the exception of names that are stylized, as in AlHurra.

DECLARATION

This work has not previously been accepted in substance for any degree and is not being concurrently submitted in candidature for any degree.

Statement 1

This thesis is the result of my own investigation, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references.

Statement 2

I hereby give consent for my thesis, if accepted, to be available for photocopying and for inter-library loan, and for the summary to be made available to outside organizations.

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SECTION ONE: LITERATURE REVIEW, THEORY AND CONTEXT

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

[W]riting is one of the crafts which help society to live ... now perfection in the crafts is relative ... hence imperfection in writing is due not to a lack of religion or morals but to economic and social causes.

IBN KHALDUN
THE PROLEGOMENA²

1) THE PROBLEM

“Arabic TV does not do our country justice,” President Bush complained in early 2006. “They sometimes put out propaganda that just isn’t right, it isn’t fair, and it doesn’t give people the impression of what we’re about.”³

Since the satellite channel Al-Jazeera first aired a videotape of Osama bin Laden in the weeks after the bombings of the World Trade Center and the Pentagon on Sept. 11, 2001, the Arab media – and media in other parts of the Muslim world – has been the target of a sustained campaign of criticism from the Bush administration charging it with anti-American bias. The debate over Arab media “bias” in both the mainstream media and Western academia has largely been predicated on the assumption that Arab journalists should ascribe to Western journalistic values and mores. Little attention has been given to a more fundamental question: how do Arab journalists, who are predominantly Muslims, perceive their own role and what are the worldviews through which they witness events?

There are various reports documenting the constraints that govern journalism in the Arab and non-Arab Muslim worlds,⁴ a growing body of scholarly work examining the transformation of media structures,⁵ and a handful of limited content analyses of media in the region since 9/11, primarily in the popular press.⁶ However, a huge gap exists in the literature when it comes to the profile of Arab and Muslim journalists, their values, beliefs, politics, religious worldview, etc. The literature contains no formal survey of Arab or non-Arab Muslim journalists, beyond a few limited, country-specific studies.

2) PURPOSE

The purpose of this study is to measure the views of journalists in the Arab world in order to assess the degree to which Islamic values and Arab nationalism shape their approach to Western journalistic ideal-types and the mission of Arab journalism in the post-9/11 Middle East. Understanding the way in which Arab journalists view their profession and the events they cover is a critical step in understanding how public opinion is shaped in the Arab world. As William Rugh wrote in his classic study of the Arab news media:

...the editor's perception of events, which are determined by his own experience and his cultural, historic, economic, and social environment, cause him to make certain choices in the presentation of news. This cultural bias is the main reason for a given medium's particular slant on the news. It leads to similarities within a given Arab country and also on another level within the Arab world, in the news-handling function of the media.⁷

3) THESIS

It is the central thesis of this study that Arab journalists at the dawn of the 21st century embody a worldview that combines pan-Arabism – stripped of the Utopian garb of Arab nationalism – with a heightened sense of Muslim identity. Further, it is the author's contention that while Arab journalists share with colleagues around the world a basic set of normative professional values, such norms quickly fall away in the face of empirical challenges to their core identity of religion, nationality and ethnicity. This study is a direct extension of this writer's earlier work involving the impact of worldview, rhetoric and media framing on the deterioration of relations between the West and the Muslim world.⁸ The motivation stems from the author's close observation of Arab journalists and sense that many of the accusations and clichés about journalism in the Middle East are based on the same kinds of stereotypes and misunderstandings that shape the broader relationship between the West and the Muslim world, as detailed in the book cited above. Media, as will be demonstrated in this study, play an important part in shaping public opinion. It is therefore critical for Western policymakers to have an accurate understanding of Arab journalists if they are going to effectively communicate through them to the Arab public.

Cultural psychologists point to the existence of cultural “amplifiers”⁹ and “filters,” which “mediate perception, memory, self-concept, and other psychological phenomena,” political ideology among them.¹⁰ Operating in a historically-repressive media environment that has been shaken to its foundations by the arrival of Al-Jazeera, a plethora of semi-independent news outlets, and the internet; in a region on the defensive in the face of US and Israeli military action and what are widely perceived as hegemonic attempts to force political change; Arab journalists perceive their role in a very different way than their Western counterparts, even though they may voice normative aspirations to the (rarely-attained) Western journalistic ideal-type of the detached observer.

The use of the term “journalism” in the title of this dissertation is a conscious one; the survey documents the attitudes of a discrete pool of 517 *journalists*. But, given its representative nature (see methodology), I maintain, it is reflective of a trend within Arab *journalism* as a whole.

4) BEYOND ORIENTALISM

The mere mention of the words “culture” or “psychology” and “Arab” in the same sentence is enough to raise red flags in certain scholarly circles. To argue that culture plays a part in shaping the worldviews of twenty-first century Arabs is not to engage in the now-discredited Orientalist cultural psychology of an earlier era, which posited the existence of an ethnically-monolithic “Arab mind”¹¹ or to suggest, as Edward Said summarized in his scathing critique of Orientalism, that Westerners can frame Middle East events through a one-sided prism that “obscures what we *do*, and highlights instead, what Muslims and Arabs, by their very flawed nature, *are*.”¹²

Rather than a throwback to simplistic and patronizing theories of cultural determinism, cultural psychology in its modern incarnation is a science that recognizes culture as a fundamental constituent among the multiplicity of influences that affect how an individual sees the world.¹³ Culture is a primary influence in the production of systems of thought and systems of belief, otherwise known as ideologies and religions.¹⁴ “Indeed,” writes Middle East scholar Fred Halliday, “to escape from the simplifications of ‘cultural’ determinism, we need not ignore culture in the name of supposedly more ‘material’ factors, like state and class, but draw on an informed and creatively theorized analysis of culture, of

which latter scholarly category we already have a distinguished body in regard to the Middle East.”¹⁵

5) APPROACH

The core of this study involved a quantitative survey of 517 Arab journalists from 13 countries who were asked to respond to a series of 48 multiple choice questions covering topics ranging from basic demographics to views of the mission of Arab journalism and attitudes toward a range of international issues.¹⁶ This was supplemented by more than 60 formal and informal qualitative interviews with Arab journalists.

6) RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Q1: What do Arab journalists perceive as their primary mission?

Q2: What are the attitudes of Arab journalists on key policy issues?

Q3: Is there a significant difference between the attitudes of Arab journalists professing a high level of religiosity and those professing a more secular outlook?

Q4: How do the stated attitudes of Arab journalists compare to those of the Arab public?

Q5: How do the stated attitudes of Arab journalists compare to those of their colleagues from other countries on specific questions of journalistic norms?

7) THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study is built on a theoretical framework drawing on the disciplines of Islamic studies, Middle East studies, international relations and media studies. Specifically, the theoretical framework rests on Anderson’s theory of nationalism, with its emphasis on the role of media in shaping “imagined communities;”¹⁷ Mandaville’s theory of post-Islamism, which makes the argument that Islamists in recent years have adopted an approach based on “pragmatism and policy” that is synergistic with those of more secular agents of social and political change and oriented toward national and local issues rather than the pan-Islamic *umma*;¹⁸ and, from media studies, Shoemaker and Reese’s “hierarchy of influences” model, which posits that mass media content – and the journalists who produce it – are shaped by a multitude of forces.¹⁹

8) RELEVANCE TO ISLAMIC STUDIES

“Islamic Studies” is a term that can be defined narrowly – the study of the religion of Islam – or broadly to encompass a multiplicity of disciplines that touch on the Muslim world. For the purposes of this dissertation, we will adopt the definition used by the Higher Education Funding Council for England in its report, “International Approaches to Islamic studies in Higher Education:”

‘Islamic Studies’ is taken to include the study of Islam and Muslim societies in a variety of disciplines and departments, including named Islamic Studies programmes as well as Religious Studies, History, languages and literature, Politics, Anthropology and Sociology, and interdisciplinary area studies programmes in Middle East or South Asian Studies.²⁰

In this case, Media Studies is added to that list. Given the dramatic impact that the explosive growth of a politicized form of Islam has had on everything from international relations to the nature of identity in recent years, the purview of Islamic studies can no longer be confined to the walls of the mosque or the pages of Islamic texts. As the 2007 Siddiqui report put it, “The Islamic Studies syllabus needs to look beyond language and classical texts and/or area studies, particularly those narrowly focused on Middle East.”²¹

In a very vivid way, Islam now reaches into politics, culture and human relationships from Cairo, Egypt to Cairo, Illinois, the Northern Frontier Province of Pakistan to Finsbury Park. So, too, must Islamic studies expand its writ into fields once reserved for social scientists. Turn on the television these days and it seems that everyone is an “expert” on Islam: psychologists, political scientists, legal scholars and just about any journalist who has ever visited a mosque. Scholars of Islam cannot afford to cede the stage if they are to make a contribution to the development of an accurate understanding of the very real impact Islam is having in the modern world. The alternative is for Islamic studies to be sidelined and academically ghettoized. But at the same time, the discipline must be prepared to bring under its tent theories and knowledge from a wide range of other disciplines if it is to help policymakers and the public-at-large contextualize the headlines of the day.

This is not just true of Islamic studies. There exists a nascent movement among scholars of religion in general to examine all religion outside the traditional boundaries of faith, doctrines, histories and orders. As Stewart M. Hoover writes in his introduction to *Practicing Religion in the Age of the Media*, "The approach taken is necessarily cross-disciplinary." Hoover goes on to note that "too much [scholarly] writing and thinking about religion and the media has fallen into discussions of the sacrality or secularity of forms or practices" and discussions of "mediated religion" or "religious media;" categories that are "too narrow and too constraining to contain the rich range of phenomena" at work.²² This writer endorses such sentiments and intends to draw on his background in journalism and international affairs, as well as the work of scholars in a variety of disciplines, in an attempt to make a contribution to the field of Islamic studies by examining the *explicit* and *implicit* role that Islam plays in the worldviews of Arab journalists, who themselves play such a critical role in shaping Muslim attitudes toward regional and international issues and, by extension, Western attitudes toward Islam.

9) DEFINITIONS

The terms "Islam" and "Islamism" are not used interchangeably. In places in the text, I mention Islam in the context of the religion and/or its influence on journalists. At other points I consciously refer to "Islamism, in the sense of the term as it "refers to forms of political theory and practice that have as their goal the establishment of an Islamic political order [and] a commitment to the idea that Islam and public life [are] inextricably intertwined."²³ It is important to note that Islamism is not – necessarily – synonymous with a commitment to a trans-national Islamic state. One of the twentieth century's most influential Islamist thinkers, Muslim Brotherhood founder Hassan al-Banna (1906-1949), sought "to reform the existing state through an emphasis on what we might term 'social Islam,'" and was "perfectly comfortable with the idea of pursuing an Islamic social order within the framework of the nationalist state."²⁴

The Middle East refers to the Arab states of the Levant, Iraq, the Gulf and Yemen, along with Iran.

10) SCOPE

This study is purposely focused on journalists working for major print and broadcast outlets. It is the intention of this study to examine the attitudes of those working in the “mainstream” of Arab journalism, primarily those working for the pan-Arab satellite broadcasters, the three largest pan-Arab newspapers and the dominant national media in select Arab countries.²⁵

11) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study constitutes the first substantive cross-border survey of journalists in the Arab world, creating a portrait of journalists at a critical moment at which both the region and Arab journalism are in the throes of transition. As a result of the broad “footprint” of television channels such as Al-Jazeera, Arab media has a substantial influence in the broader Muslim world.²⁶ The study will offer important insights for scholars and policymakers interested in Arab/Muslim public opinion and the way it is formed. The study will also provide a baseline against which future researchers can track the continuing evolution of media in the Arab world.

CHAPTER II: ISLAM, ARAB NATIONALISM AND THE PSYCHOLOGY OF IDENTITY

Muhammad was the epitome of all the Arabs. So let all the Arabs today be Muhammad.

MICHEL AFLAQ
CO-FOUNDER OF THE ARAB NATIONALIST BA'ATH PARTY²⁷

1) THEORIES OF NATIONALISM

There are many definitions of the term “nationalism.” One of the simplest is found in *The Dictionary of International Relations*, which states that “nationalism seeks to identify a behavioral entity - the nation - and thereafter to pursue certain political and cultural goals on behalf of it. In the second usage, nationalism is a sentiment of loyalty toward the nation which is shared by people.”²⁸

At the root of it all, according to sociologist Liam Greenfeld, lays the issue of sovereignty:

Nationalism locates the source of individual identity within a “people,” which is seen as the bearer of sovereignty, the central object of loyalty, and the basis of collective solidarity. [That] people [is] the mass of a population whose boundaries and nature are defined in various ways.²⁹

Ernest Gellner (1925-1995) likewise saw sovereignty at the core of nationalism, which he defines as a “political principal, which holds that the political and the national unit should be congruent.”³⁰ French theorist Ernest Renan (1823-1892) took a more transcendent approach to the concept of nation and nationalist sentiment. “A nation is a soul, a spiritual principle,” he observed, “a large-scale solidarity, constituted by the feeling of the sacrifices that one has made in the past and of those that one is prepared to make in the future.”³¹

There are three broad categories of nationalism in its modern context: “cultural nationalism,” in which nation is built on a common culture, as in the Quebecois or the Flemish of Belgium; “liberal nationalism,” which emphasizes the ideal of liberal democracy and takes practical form in the writings of Zionist Theodore Hertzl (1860-1904), German

nationalist Johann Gottlieb Fichte (1762-1814), and Irish patriots such as Daniel O'Connell (1775-1847); and the "triumphal nationalism" of the Prussians and Nazi Germany.

Any discussion of nationalism is dominated by a handful of towering figures. The names Gellner, Benedict Anderson, John Armstrong, Anthony Smith, John Breuilly and Eric Hobsbawm are pre-eminent in the field. All but Smith are adherents of the "modernist" school of nationalism which maintains that prior to the industrial age, the elites benefited from the fragmented nature of the societies they ruled, and thus had no incentive to encourage or foster any form of cultural homogeneity. It was only with the rise of commerce – and the communications infrastructure required for the spread of commerce – that notions of shared identity began to bind peoples into cohesive units we today call nations.

Not all scholars accept the argument of these "modernists" that nationalism is a product of the "modernization" born in the 18th century. Adrian Hastings is among those positing a medieval origin tied to the rise of Biblical religion. "If nationalism became theoretically central to Western political thinking in the nineteenth century, it existed as a powerful reality in some places long before that," he wrote, placing its birth to England in 1066. Greenfeld concurs: "The birth of the English nation was not the birth of a nation, it was the birth of the nations, the birth of nationalism."³²

The so-called "primordialists" reach back even further, arguing that the sense of identity which we now call nationalism has existed far back into the dim mists of human history. Much of the disagreement centers on the core questions of what is nationalism and national identity? The pre-modernists point to the Cherokee nation, the Phoenicians and the self-perception of groups from the Jews to the Franks as God's "chosen people" as evidence that ethno-cultural identity existed long before the 18th century. They hear strains of nationalism in the writings of Aristotle and Machiavelli and see its imprint in ancient Mesopotamia, on the steppes of Mongolia and the ashes of Joan d 'Arc's pyre. As Irish scholar and diplomat Conor Cruise O'Brien put it:

[W]hat is called nationalism is an expression of the primordial attachments of an individual to a group, possessing both positive and destructive powers, and this is a phenomenon which existed long before the group to which such

passionate loyalty was attached became the modern nation-state. . . . The nationalist has his heart in his work. . . . He acts from the roots of being, of human society, from a given earth and clan-primordial attachments.³³

At the other end of the spectrum are the “post-modernists” or “post-nationalists.” These fall into two groups: Those, such as British “Third Way” theorist Anthony Giddens, who argue that globalization and the evolution of international politics means humanity is moving into a multi-cultural, transnational era beyond the identifications of the past, and that the very concept of ethnic identity – and perhaps even the nation-state itself – will soon be consigned to the dustbin of history; and a second camp, including figures such as Matthew Horsman and Andrew Marshall, who predict nations will be replaced by a new tribalism.³⁴

According to the modernists who dominate the field, true nationalism, in the sense it is used today, can be traced to the breakup of Napoleonic Europe and the Austro-Hungarian Empire and is intrinsically tied to the structures of the “modern” era. “Nations and their associated phenomena must therefore be analyzed in terms of political, technical, administrative, economic and other conditions and requirements,” according to Eric Hobsbawm.³⁵ Breuilly goes so far as to define nationalism in terms of opposition to existing states.³⁶

Anthony Smith takes a syncretic approach that meshes the power of myth that so dominates the primordialist model with the facilitating power of modernity, describing the nation as “a named human population which shares myths and memories, a mass public culture, a designated homeland, economic unity, and equal rights and duties for all members.”³⁷ For him, ethnicity and cultural community play the critical role in national identity, which he believes existed, in some cases, long before the advent of the modern age. It is a notion Gellner rejected in their famous 1995 Warwick Debates, when he disparaged the idea that 19th century peasants, such as those of modern-day Estonia, were recognized as anything more than “people who lived on the land ... just a category without any ethnic self-consciousness.”³⁸

In part, this comes back to the very definition of nationalism and nation. "Nation," wrote Charles Tilly (1929-2008), is "one of the most puzzling and tendentious items in the political lexicon."³⁹ Even the modernists acknowledge that there existed many pockets of shared identity in the distant past, but this "tribal" identity, they say, does not alone constitute a "national identity." Gellner argued that the mutual awareness of "a shared high culture" – as opposed to some more elemental sense of community – is a fundamental pillar of nationalism. That, he and other modernists insist, arose only with the advent of modernity. "The central fact seems to me that what has really happened in the modern world is that the role of culture in human life was totally transformed by that cluster of economic and scientific changes which have transformed the world since the seventeenth century," he told the Warwick audience, adding:

[T]he maintenance of the kind of high culture, the kind of medium in which society operates, is politically precarious and expensive. It is linked to the state as a protector and usually the financier or at the very least the quality controller of the educational process which makes people members of this kind of culture. This is the theory.⁴⁰

The role of communication in the formation of national identity was singled out early in the emergence of nationalism theory. In distinguishing between "people," "nationality" and "nation" in his classic post-war work, *Nationalism and Social Communication*, Karl W. Deutsch (1912-1992) focused on the transmission of ideas in the formation of a "people," which he defined as "a larger group of persons linked by ... complementary habits and facilities of communication."⁴¹

John A. Armstrong, another leading thinker in the field, argues that different civilizations, whether Western Christendom or the Islamic world, arrive at the point of nation-state from different directions. But at root, he believes, "myth, symbol, communication, and a cluster of associated attitudinal factors" ultimately combine to produce what he calls the "mythomoteur" or "constitutive myth of the polity" in every culture.⁴² Hobsbawm points to such disparate examples as the success of Nazi propaganda and the British royal family's Christmas broadcast as evidence of the role of mass media in making post-1918 nationalism an element of everyday life. Through the press, cinema and

radio “popular ideologies could be both standardized, homogenized and transformed.” While this facilitated the effectiveness of mass propaganda, it “was almost certainly less significant than the ability of the mass media to make what were in effect national symbols part of the life of every individual, and thus to break down the divisions between the private and the local spheres in which most citizens normally lived, and the public and national one.”⁴³

This acknowledgement of the import of communications in the formation of national identity most famously finds its expression in Benedict Anderson’s concept of the “imagined community.” The nation, wrote Anderson in his now-classic text, “is an imagined political community:”

It is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion.⁴⁴

The word is the fundamental unifying force of Anderson’s imagined community. “[T]he sacred silent languages were the media through which the great global communities of the past were imagined,” he writes, referring to Christendom, the Islamic *umma* and the Chinese civilization,⁴⁵ and it was the rise of vernacular languages to replace Latin that laid the seeds for European ethnic nationalism, which was then fed and nurtured by changing economic structures, social and scientific discoveries, and, linking it all, the spread of increasingly rapid means of communication.

Nothing perhaps more precipitated this search, nor made it more fruitful, than print-capitalism, which made it possible for rapidly growing numbers of people to think about themselves, and to relate themselves to others, in profoundly new ways.⁴⁶

And it does not take a major leap of imagination to recognize that what was true of European peasants 500 years ago has profound implications for the modern Arab world:

[A]dvances in communications technology, especially radio and television, give print allies [that were] unavailable a century ago. Multilingual

broadcasting can conjure up the imagined community to illiterates and populations with different mother-tongues.⁴⁷

Hobsbawm saw the commitment of language to print as an important step toward ensuring its permanence. However, he was skeptical of language's role in *creating* nations: "[l]anguages multiply with states; not the other way around."⁴⁸ That analysis betrays a Euro-centric view of nationalism, ignoring nations such as Indonesia, where more than 300 locally-based languages struggle to exist under the pressure of Bahasa Indonesia, a Malay-based trader's language adopted to unify the nation shortly after independence.⁴⁹ And it appears to fly in the face of the fact that more than 300 indigenous languages are under threat of extinction in Africa alone.⁵⁰

Though he traces its impact to a far earlier timeframe, even Hastings acknowledges that "by far the most important and widely present factor [in the formation of national identity] is that of an extensively used vernacular literature." Specifically, he wrote, "The Bible provided, for the Christian world at least, the original model of the nation."⁵¹ It was a function he saw borne out in later manifestations of nationalism: "Every ethnicity is shaped significantly by religion, just as it is by language."⁵²

The rise of nations *per se* is not the only outgrowth of the Information Revolution. "The new systems of mass communications – radio, television, videos, personal computers – are also encouraging much smaller social and political groups and ethnic and linguistic communities to create and sustain their own dense social and cultural networks, in opposition both to national states and the wider continental or global culture," according to Smith.⁵³

Jean-Marie Guehenno, the former head of UN peacekeeping operations and a leading voice of post-nationalist theory, sees this trend contributing to a "Lebanization" that threatens even developed nations. This "age of networks" means "territory (spatial proximity) is of dwindling importance," producing a "world that is at once unified and without a center."⁵⁴

According to Smith, religious resurgence is one element of this new media-driven cultural/political landscape:

The spread of global patterns of politics and communications have helped to revive the ethnic ties of many communities through the return by many people to religion ... [for] ... religious mythologies act as guarantors of the redemption of oppressed *ethnies* or reinstators of by-passed ethnic values and life-styles.⁵⁵

It is on this issue of religion that Anderson's thesis shows its weakness. He equated the dawn of the age of nationalism in eighteenth century Europe with "the dusk of religious modes of thought."⁵⁶ It was an ironic observation, given that much of his empirical research was set in Indonesia, the world's most populous Muslim country, where religion is today wielding a powerful political influence.

Yet a closer examination of Anderson's analysis of the demise of religion argues *for*, rather than *against*, his relevance to the twenty-first century Arab world. It is only passing that Anderson refers to the importance of Arabic in the emergence of Islam as "one of the great religiously imagined communities." The thrust of his rationale for the *waning* of the "unselfconscious coherence of religion" is Euro-centric, and relates to the role of the Christian church. The first factor in the demise of religious influence, he writes, was the widening of horizons brought about by the exploration of the non-European world. The second was "the gradual demotion of the sacred language itself," by which, of course, he means Latin. But, arguably, little of this applies to the Arab world. Rather than "widening horizons," the colonial age – and more recent developments – produced much the opposite effect, a defensive turning inward. And where Europe's Christian Church replaced Latin with the vernacular, Arabic lives. Islam remains strong and Arabic continues to be the unifying linguistic force precisely because the reasons he cites for the demise of religion – exposure to new ideas and loss of the sacred religion – are *not* true of the Middle East in the way they are in Europe. It is a reminder that the theories behind nationalism cannot be carved in stone; there is no 'one size fits all' template.

As Middle East and South Asia scholars Juan Cole and Deniz Kandiyoti observe, "The argument that religions are universal and so excluded from playing ... a specific role [in formation of national consciousness] is deeply flawed." Pointing to examples in Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and India, he adds:

Religion, like any other identity, is a field of contestation rather than a stable essence, and struggles over the definition and place of religion can be variably articulated with a national sense of identity that is itself fluid and changing.⁵⁷

Here again, we come back to the role of media. With the spread of satellite television, Modern Standard Arabic (MSA) – often called “news Arabic” – is more than ever emerging as a bridge that form an overlay above the many varieties of colloquial Arabic heard in the region, even as classical Arabic retains its sacred position in the mosque. As Marwan Kraidy has written, “Watching Arab satellite television, one often senses a pan-Arab vernacular language emerging, heavily influenced by Levantine Arabic, as a kind of pan-Arab *lingua franca*. These developments do point to the emergence of a pan-Arab ‘imagined community’ with converging concerns and a sense of regional belonging.”⁵⁸

The post-modernists may be closer to the mark than Anderson when they speak of a resurgence of religion, through which non-state actors “inherit the functions that the nation filled in the institutional age.”⁵⁹ To see the functioning of non-state actors who have varying degrees of regional allegiances but strong religious credentials, one need look no further than the civil society infrastructures of Hezbollah’s “human state” in which, according to anthropologist Augustus Richard Norton, Shia social associations have become “an essential part of the construction of a modern, confident notion of identity,”⁶⁰ and Hamas, which, according to Mandaville, combined the religious legitimacy, social services and social authority inherited from its predecessor, the Muslim Brotherhood, to build “the foundations of is political legitimacy.”⁶¹

However, much of what Anderson says about the psychological nature of nationalism does resonate with the modern Arab world, especially in the context of the rise of Islamic identity. Nationalism, he argues, was neither *produced by* the erosion of religious identity nor *supersedes it*, but rather can best be understood by *aligning it with* the “large cultural systems that preceded it,” one of which is “religious community.” And, he adds, nationalism has always shown a strong affinity with “religious imaginings,” pointing in particular to the connection of “the cultural roots of nationalism with death.”⁶² Gellner also saw a “great parallel” between the “scripturalist-puritanism” of the Muslim reformers “and

nationalism, in that Islam links the believer to both a far-flung culture and the nation-state “which alone is capable” of making “recorded truth accessible to all.”⁶³

Jorgen Habermas, the essential theorist on the role of the “public sphere” in the formation of identity, sees that issue of communication of “truth” becoming ever more influential, even as other factors that once contributed to the formation of nations fall aside. Writing in the mid-1990s, shortly after the introduction of the European common market, Habermas called for a new structure through which to bind citizenry to the political public sphere. “This provides a model of a deliberative democracy that no longer hinges on the assumption of macro-subjects like the ‘people’ or ‘the’ community but on anonymously interlinked discourses or flows of communication.” For Habermas, the emergence of a true sense of European citizenship depends on “the vitality of the informal circuit of public communication.” Media-driven “world citizenship,” he believes, is a logical final stop on the continuum.⁶⁴

As noted earlier, nationalism is not a political principal alone. It is also a sentiment. “Nationalism is first and foremost a state of mind,” wrote Hans Kohn (1891-1971), an early nationalism theorist, “an act of consciousness;”⁶⁵ the nation as “the nation as “a community of shared sacrifice.”⁶⁶ In the context of this dissertation, that is important to note. Gellner defines “nationalist *sentiment*” as “the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of the principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment. A nationalist *movement* is one actuated by a sentiment of this kind”⁶⁷ and Anderson insists that popular nationalism is always mobilized “in a language of self-defense.”⁶⁸

That theme of unity forged in the face of the Other makes frequent appearances in the various theories of nationalism. After vernacular literature, Hastings identified “[a] long struggle against an external threat” as having the most significant effect on formation of national identity. “It arises chiefly where and when a particular ethnicity or nation feels itself threatened in regard to its own proper character, extent or importance.”⁶⁹ Edward Said (1935-2003) tells us “[t]he development and maintenance of every culture require the existence of another, different and competing alter ego.” The “construction of identity,” he continues, “involves the construction of opposites and ‘others.’”⁷⁰

The Balkanization of the former Yugoslavia, the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and the simmering strife between India and Pakistan are all examples of this nationalism in the face of the Other. "At the end of the twentieth century," according to Middle East historian Ilan Pappé, "nationalism became the language of opposition, religious or not, to the ruling elites and their supporters in the West."⁷¹ The irony, according to Smith, is that "the increased power of modern mass communications to amplify and broadcast" cultural and historic differences itself "binds many peoples more closely to an ethno-history and heritage that they feel may be under threat."⁷²

In the "banal nationalism" theory of social psychologist Michael Billig, this defensiveness lies lurking just below the surface even in apparently stable and peaceful modern nations, ready to erupt in the face of a perceived threat.⁷³ It is the "deep horizontal comradeship" described by Anderson that "makes possible, over the past two centuries, for so many millions of people, not so much to kill, as willingly to die for such limited imaginings."⁷⁴

It is in this defensive role that Smith believes "pan" nationalisms have their greatest impact. While he is dismissive of their political success to date, Smith argues that ideologies such as pan-Arabism and pan-Africanism help "underpin the national state" by creating "border guards" that provide "a new panoply of symbols and myths, memories and values, that set the included national states apart ... through opposition to culturally different neighbours and enemies."⁷⁵ The rapid growth of telecommunications and mass media, he believes, leaves open the possibility that "regional associations based on 'Pan' nationalisms can generate overarching cultures and identities that compete with, or even replace, national state and ethnic identities,"⁷⁶ an eventuality left open in Anderson's description of the "finite, if elastic boundaries" of the imagined community⁷⁷ and a task Breuilly believes is a fundamental function of the nationalist.⁷⁸

Perhaps no one is more explicit about the import of the "pervasive" and "crucial" role played by the media in the spread of nationalism than Smith. It is, he says, "crystal clear" that "[w]hat is actually *said*" – the message fed through the media – matters little:"
Rather,

It is the media themselves, the pervasiveness and importance of abstract, centralized, standardized, one to many communication, which itself automatically engenders the core idea of nationalism, quite irrespective [of the] specific messages transmitted. That core message is that the language and style of the transmissions is important, that only he who can understand them ... is included in a moral and economic community.⁷⁹

2) THEORIES OF ARAB NATIONALISM

Certain aspects of the various theories of nationalism elaborated above come up short when applied to the Middle East. Gellner's focus on the shift from agrarian to industrial society is undermined by the fact that, even today, some Arab countries cannot yet truly be considered "industrialized," and certainly were not early in the last century. The patchwork quilt of what are essentially tribal allegiances that make up Lebanon, and the fact that some readily-identifiable "peoples," such as the Kurds, do not have their own nation-state, would seem to bring into question Smith's emphasis on *ethnies* – which provide the mythologies, culture and "association with an ancient homeland" – in the formation of the nation-state (though his caveat that if the nation does not have those *ethnies*, it must appropriate them or risk collapse seems to be borne out in Lebanon);⁸⁰ while, as Sami Zubaida has pointed out, the "Arabism with an Islamic tinge" of Iraq's Ba'athists – much less the fragmented identities that have followed the overthrow of Saddam Hussein – raise problems for Anderson's theory that nationalism replaces religion in the nation-state.⁸¹

However, when applied on the broader stage of "pan-Arabism" rather than nation-state nationalism in the Arab world, many of these ideas – married with the common themes of language, communication and shared cultures that are found in most theories of nationalism – find a ready home. For example, to say that Druzes and Maronites are not naturally linked by a shared *ethnie* or culture, and that it was the imposition of the artificial boundaries of Lebanon that produced the somewhat forced shared national identity that (sometimes) links them today, is by no means to undermine the idea that, on a much higher level, they are part of a shared "imagined community" of Arabs bound by race, language and culture. Adeed Dawisha points out that Greenfeld's belief that England was the prototype for nationalism has implications for Arab nationalism. "Not only is the English

'race' patently mixed, but English as a language emerged from the linguistic influences of the various peoples who had invaded and settled the country," he wrote, a situation that has parallels among the Arab peoples.⁸²

Though others touched on the region, only one well-known theorist of nationalism specifically writes from the perspective of the Arab world. Elie Kedourie (1926-1992), a British historian born in Baghdad to an Iraqi Jewish family, took a dim view of nationalism, which he called a "principle of disorder" that laid the groundwork for "the tyranny of one group over another." A devout conservative, Kedourie saw nationalism as a dangerous ideology that arose from Germanic ideas of national destiny, rejecting the argument of Gellner and other modernists that it was a sociological outgrowth of the industrial revolution. His 1960 work, *Nationalism*, darkly predicted that anti-colonial nationalism would feed despotic rule in Africa and Asia.⁸³ He saw Arab nationalism as an artificial construct of European influence and later blamed nationalism for turning the Middle East into a "wilderness of tigers."⁸⁴

Kedourie's theory has been widely criticized. Gellner was scathing. "An author committed to the view that the ideological or doctrinal history of nationalism is largely irrelevant to the understanding of it should not perhaps indulge in debates about its intellectual ancestry," he wrote,⁸⁵ but Kedourie continues to have his supporters on the political right.

Unlike nationalism itself, there exists no overarching theory of *Arab* nationalism. This is true, at least in part, because, Ibrahim Abu-Rabi, a scholar of Islam and co-editor of *The Muslim World*, tells us, two "streams" of Arab nationalism developed, one in the Mashreq, the region between the Mediterranean Sea and Iraq, the other in the Maghreb, or North Africa, as "a function of different political, economic and social forces and conditions."⁸⁶ At the same time, according to Juan Cole, there has been "little theoretical work done on Middle Eastern nationalisms."⁸⁷ The topic has primarily been the purview of historians, rather than sociologists, anthropologists or political scientists, with the scholarship focused on specifics of Arab nationalist and/or nation-state loyalties "with little concern for theoretical questions."⁸⁸ As Rashid Khalidi noted in the introduction to *The Origins of Arab Nationalism*, a plethora of scholarly books and articles examine the history of Arab

nationalism in individual countries or sections of the Middle East, such as the Levant and Egypt, however, “a comprehensive treatment spanning more than a century and covering the region as a whole has been absent.”⁸⁹ Even among the many works of history, he wrote elsewhere,

there has frequently been a failure to analyze the Arab case using methodologies derived from some of the more critical recent approaches in the study of nationalism. This failure has been linked with an unquestioning acceptance of elements of the national narrative – or myths, to put it more bluntly – generated by Arab nationalism ... [producing studies] that are often partisan and controversial ... [and] surrounded by clouds of polemics.⁹⁰

Historians of Arab nationalism, such as George Antonius (1891-1941), Albert Hourani (1915-1993), Hisham Sharabi, Bassam Tibi, Philip Hitti (1886-1978), Albert Hourani (1915-1993) and Khalidi himself,⁹¹ disagree on many of the details of the movement’s history, such as whether it was driven by the Christian bourgeoisie, led by Muslims and Turks or, as Kedourie argues, a creation of British military officers. Even some of the basics produce dissent. “Just what Arab nationalism meant to its proponents” at its birth in the years before World War I “has been difficult to determine,” wrote C. Ernest Dawn, one of the early modern scholars in the field.⁹² But there is general agreement that early Arab nationalists drew on European concepts of *patria* and patriotism as a means of repelling Western designs on the region after the collapse of Ottoman Muslim rule.

Most important in the context of this dissertation is discussion of the relationship between pan-Arab nationalism, Arab nation-state nationalism, and Islamism. It is “conventional wisdom” in many scholarly, journalistic and policy circles in the West that Arab nationalism and Islamism are warring ideologies. Some observers of the Middle East and/or nationalism have argued that the belief systems of the two are fundamentally incompatible.⁹³ However, such views are too often based on black-and-white perceptions that fail to take into account the complex Realpolitik of the modern Arab world and the shifting cross-currents of Arab history.

There is no dispute that the ultimate goals of Arab nationalism and political Islam are fundamentally different. Arab nationalists seek to erase the lines written in the sand by European colonialists and reunite the Arab nation; Islamists ultimately want to restore the glory of the Muslim Caliphate, an empire that grouped Europeans, Africans, Asians and Arabs alike. But for each, those goals are part of the long-term game plan that can only be achieved through tactical victories. Arab nationalism and Islamism are two sides of the “Janus-faced” Arab cultural and political identity, and as David Laitin noted in his study of political culture, “shared cultural identities facilitate collective action.”⁹⁴

The theory propounded by Dawn, who brought the term Arabism into the modern lexicon, is that movement owes its existence to Islam. “There is convincing evidence that the prevailing ideology of Arab nationalists in the twentieth century was formed in the 1920s, at the latest, from Islamic modernist roots,” he writes. “Arab nationalism arose out of the failure of its immediate predecessor and its ideological parent, Islamic modernist Ottomanism.”⁹⁵

Islam is, first and foremost, a religion, but, for many Muslims, it is also “a complete way of life”⁹⁶ or, as Muslim Brotherhood ideologue Said Qutb (1906-1966) put it, the “well-head” for “any matter that pertains to faith.”⁹⁷ Abu-Rabi frames it in more academic terms:

Islam is both normative and historical; in other words, it is both theological and rational. The theological expresses itself as fascination with divine mystery, whereas the rational deals with the fascination of human history.⁹⁸

In short, he says, “There are a multiplicity of meanings inherent in the term *Islam*. Islam as text and theology, Islam as human thought; as history; and as one or several institutions.”⁹⁹ In Islam, sacred law (*sharia*) finds its application not only as a set of religious principles, but as direct guidance for daily life.¹⁰⁰

In its political guise, known as Islamism, Islam can also be considered a form of religious nationalism. Robert Saunders calls the Islamic *umma* a post-national political identity that is “as profound as any extant nationalism.”¹⁰¹ Islamic revivalist Abul Ala Maududi (1903-1979), the founder of Jama’at-i-Islami who is said to have influenced Qutb,¹⁰² described Islam as a “revolutionary concept and ideology which seeks to

change and revolutionize the world social order and reshape it according to its own concept and ideals.”¹⁰³ Maududi, a South Asian and, not incidentally in the context of this dissertation, a one-time journalist, represents the hard edge of Islamist political thought. Not every Islamist seeks to overturn the world order and reunite the *umma*. The world’s Muslims are “as diverse as humanity itself” and reflect a host of competing religious, political and ideological schools of thought.¹⁰⁴ Halliday places the term “Islamism” in a modern context, explaining that “Islamism serves to articulate the interests and identity of groups that form part of a broader political community that may include Muslims and non-Muslims of, even where all are Muslims, includes divergent sects of Islam or different linguistic or ethnic groups.”¹⁰⁵

According to Abu-Rabi, contemporary Arab thought is “the product of a complex intellectual formation” built on three foundations identified by Hassan Hanafi, an Egyptian philosopher known for interpreting Islam to the West, as classical Islamic heritage, modern Western heritage, and “the present realities of the Arab world.”¹⁰⁶ Where Arab nationalism owes much to Western concepts of nationalism, Islamism arose from the neo-orthodox Salafi movement, which seeks to reform Islam through a return to the traditions represented by the “pious forefathers” (*al-salaf al-salih*) and takes “Islamic revelation as the main criterion for truth.”¹⁰⁷ Its two main strains, the classical and the Wahabi, respectively trace their roots back to the Hanbali school of Islam and one of its leading proponents, Taqi al-Din Ibn Taymiyya (1263-1328), and Muhammad ibn Abd al-Wahab (1153-1740), who dissented from the prevailing Hanbali doctrine.¹⁰⁸

Islamists are those who believe, in the definition offered by Graham Fuller, author of *The Future of Political Islam*, “Islam as a body of faith has something important to say about how politics and society should be ordered in the contemporary Muslim world.”¹⁰⁹ And, like followers of many other political movements, they have demonstrated a willingness to make accommodations and alliances on the road to achieving the ultimate objective.

Yet within the community of believers there has raged a political and ideological debate over precisely what role the religion should play in everyday life, dividing Salafi into those who advocate confrontation with the state and those who, as in the Gulf, take a more passive approach; as well as another level of division between the confrontationists who

advocate violence and those who do not. Overlapping, but not exclusive to the Salafis, is the division of Muslims intellectuals into what have been called the fundamentalist and the modernist camps. For the fundamentalists, like Maududi, Islam is all-encompassing. Mansoor Moaddel and Kamran Talattof define “fundamentalists” as those whose agenda is “aimed at Islamizing virtually all social institutions.” Their perspective is summed up by the manifesto of the Islamic Salvation Front of Algeria, whose leader, Abbassi Madani is considered one of North Africa’s leading Islamist thinkers. The manifesto sets out as its first principle, “Keep to the Islamic *Shariah* ... which alone allows the treatment of all questions; whatever their importance.”¹¹⁰ The modernists include Arabs such as the Syrian Jamal al-Din al-Qasimi (1866-1914), who advocated constitutional government and called for an Arab cultural and literary revival; Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi 1822-1890), a reformer who served as both Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire and Tunisian prime minister; and Egyptian Salafist Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), who sought to apply reason to the application of *sharia* in societal reforms. They seek to reconcile the Islamic faith with modern political, cultural, social and scientific values. As Charles Kurzman explains,

The modernist Islamic movement pioneered the formation or reformation of educational institutions; agitation for political liberalization or decolonization; and the establishment of a periodical press throughout the Islamic world.¹¹¹

An essay on freedom by Egyptian Rifa’a Rafi al-Tahtawi (1801-1873), for example, paints a picture of a free and just “*watan* [nation]” built on a set of rights lifted directly from the French Constitution and setting out “natural” freedom, “behavioral” freedom, freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and political freedom, all of which, he notes, are “consistent with the wisdom of the philosophers ... the laws of the Messengers prior to Islam” and is “supported by sharia and nature.”¹¹² Such ideas drew the wrath of the fundamentalists, who charged al-Tahtawi with abandoning the faith.

This intellectual debate reached a zenith in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, even as Arabism was coming to the fore. That synchronicity of timing and agendas – driven by the same external factors – contributed to the evolution of a “collective political identity”¹¹³ among Arab nationalists and proponents of political Islam that has

ebbed and flowed in the years since, producing short-term political alliances and a long-term synergy of interests that belies the notion of ideological movements eternally at loggerheads. This expedience finds its voice in the words of Ayatollah Hussein Fadlallah, spiritual leader of Lebanese Shi'ites: "Islam is a source of strength for the Arabs and Arab nationalism, just as Arabism is a source of strength to Islam."¹¹⁴

That same acknowledgment of the confluence of interests between Arabism and Islamism can be found in the writings of Sati al-Husri (1880-1968), director-general of education in the British Mandate government in Iraq. His 1944 book, *Muslim Unity, Arab Unity*, is considered a key tract in Arab nationalist ideology. Rejecting the regionalists – those advocating the formation of nation-states – and the Islamists alike, al-Husri saw Arab political unification as an essential first step toward the eventual emergence of a broader Islamic *umma*:

"[I]t is not possible to advocate Muslim unity without advocating Arab unity. ... We must not forget this truth ... We have, therefore, the right to assert that whoever opposes Arab unity also opposes Muslim unity.

In al-Husri's words could be heard the vivid manifestation of the "myths and memories" and the "promise of redemption" of Smith and other nationalist theoreticians:

The idea of Arab unity is a natural concept springing from the depths of social nature. ... It will without any doubt, spread all over the Arab countries, to whom it will bring back their ancient glory and primeval youth; it will indeed bring back what is most fertile, most powerful, and highest in these countries.¹¹⁵

The conscious revival of the "glory" of the ancient Semitic empires was evident in the instructions of Sami Shawkat, another Iraqi director general of education who preceded al-Husri in the 1930s. He told teachers that "history is made up according to the needs of the moment," and ordered them to reach back beyond the "prophetic message" of Muhammad (570-632) and recapture "the history of our illustrious Arab nation [which] extends over thousands of years, and goes back to the time when the peoples of Europe lived in forests and over marshes, in caves and in the interstices of the rock." Speaking of the Chaldean,

Assyrian, Pharaonic and other ancient “Semitic” civilizations, he said, “These empires and their dependencies are all our property; they are of us and for us.”¹¹⁶

Yet al-Husri himself embodied the challenges of the goal of a unified “Arab” nation. He is reported to have spoken Arabic with a Turkish accent, at times requiring a translator was among those bureaucrats who sought to deny Iraqi citizenship to the Shia, who they suspected of favoring Iran over Iraq and Arabism.¹¹⁷ In al-Husri’s Iraq, Sami Zubaida sees broader lessons for the application of nationalism theory to the Middle East. “To say that the nation is a reality is not to imply that this reality is one of solidarity or loyalty. In fact, the situation is quite the contrary,” adding:

Economic and fiscal administration, education, employment, military conscription, the media and social and cultural organization – all make the nation a fact or “facticity” compelling on the cognition and imagination of its members ... yet not necessarily of their sentiments of solidarity or loyalty.¹¹⁸

Stripped of their ultimate goals, the immediate political aims of Arabism and Islamism are strikingly similar. Some have gone so far as to call them “unseparated Siamese twins.”¹¹⁹ The political program of “pan-Islamism” (*ittihad-i islam*) outlined by Islamist Modernist Jamal ad-Din al-Afghani (1838-1897), a Persian, in the late nineteenth century sought to mobilize Muslim nations to fight against Western imperialism, sounding much like the Arab nationalist agenda of the twentieth century and the broad Arab discourse of today.¹²⁰ The artificial boundaries imposed by Western colonizers, the creation of the state of Israel, the pattern of Western aggression since the Crusades, the hypocritical contradictions of Western expressions of morality and political/military actions, Western support for authoritarian rulers and the corrupting influence of Western culture, all these complaints and more fill the speeches of political Islamist and Arab nationalist leaders alike; intellectuals representing each political philosophy feed and nurture the other. The writings of Salafist journalist Abd al-Rahman al-Kawakibi (1842-1902), for example, are considered “a milestone in the emergence of Arab nationalism and the concept of Arabism within the Ottoman Empire.”¹²¹ His manifestos against Ottoman tyranny, the need for social justice and Arabism (in particular, the role of Arabs and Arabic as the cornerstone of Islam), the first by a Muslim Arab, struck a chord with Muslim *and* Christian Arabs.¹²²

The longing for the “redemption of the oppressed” so familiar in European nationalism was now vividly apparent in the Middle East. “As Arab nationalism took hold,” writes Khalidi, “what had been described for thirteen centuries as the glories of Islamic civilization came to be called the glories of Arab civilization; the language and literature of the Arabs, always revered and cherished, took on a new and heightened importance; and a sense of pride in Arabism that had always existed but had long been dormant was consciously revived and actively fostered.”¹²³

Similarly today, Osama bin Laden’s influence stems in large part from his ability to give voice to fundamental issues of identity that resonate with the Arab mainstream: the occupation of Palestine, Western support for autocratic Arab leaders and the absence of political freedom across the region. Modern US policy, he said in his 1996 declaration of war, was part of a long history of humiliation. To bin Laden, the “Zionist-Crusader”¹²⁴ aggression in Israel, Lebanon, Iraq and elsewhere were an extension of the heroic battles of a millennium ago.

These are the same seminal issues, save the more recent imposition of Western media culture, which formed the backbone of the Arab nationalist message. Each strain of thinking strives to overcome the “psychology of subjugation,”¹²⁵ occupation and exploitation that has characterized modern Arab history. Robert Jay Lifton says bin Laden represents a convergence of psychological and historical forces:

That kind of model enables us to view al-Qaeda and related movements as many-sided, as, in fact, postmodern combinations of disparate elements: ancient Koranic doctrine recast and rendered Islamist; long-standing historical anger now directed at newly humiliating American incursions in the Middle East; contemporary worldwide fundamentalist and apocalyptic currents; anti-Western and antimodern impulses that have nonetheless absorbed aspects of various Western ideologies as well as advanced technologies; and video and cinematic imagery drawing upon universal but mainly American-inspired popular culture.¹²⁶

George Antonius, author of the first major treatise on Arab nationalism, *The Arab Awakening*, published in 1938, argued that without the Arab literary awakening the rise of Arabism would have been inconceivable and that the partnership of Islamism and Arabization had produced a “cultural revolution” among a people whose traditions had become “hybrid and debilitated.” His description of the “Arab world” as one united by ethnicity, shared traditions and language might well have come right out of the works of nationalist theoreticians who would follow decades later.¹²⁷ “Without a book, the making of a nation is in modern times inconceivable,” wrote Antonius, who said the founding of schools and the distribution of textbooks in the mid-nineteenth century helped to “pave the way [for the rise of an Arab identity] by laying the foundations of a new cultural system, for the rehabilitation of the Arabic language as a vehicle of thought.”¹²⁸

The best-known of those vehicles was the American University in Beirut, which Antonius said provided “the intellectual effervescence” for the Arab revival. Founded as Syrian Protestant College by American missionary Daniel Bliss (1823-1916), the mission of the school was to impart, as Bliss put it, “the spirit that the Americans had in 1775.”¹²⁹ The university’s graduates were among the intellectual authors of Arab nationalism, as historian Michael B. Oren has noted, “radically transform[ing] the region’s politics” and “prompting diverse Middle Eastern peoples to unite into a unique Arab nation.”¹³⁰

The spread of what would become Arab nationalism followed much the same pattern outlined in Anderson’s accounts of European nationalism: “Soon, with the power of the state propagating it through the educational system, the media, and other avenues of access to cultural and political discourse in a number of newly independent Arab countries, the Arab idea was strongly entrenched,” according to the Khalidi.¹³¹ Print technology had given the empire’s new middle class the ability to “imprint its own intellectual mark” on politics and society, according to Ottoman historian Kemal Karpat.¹³² But Gellner says there was also another factor at work in the Arab world, the synergistic role of the Islamic reformers:

Whilst European Protestantism merely prepared the ground for nationalism by furthering literacy, the reawakened Muslim potential for egalitarian

scripturalism can actually *fuse* with nationalism, so that one can hardly tell which one of the two is of most benefit to the other.¹³³

It was an alliance-of-convenience that would prove lasting.

3) THE PUSH AND PULL OF HISTORY

"The history of the Arabs [shows] they have followed the admonition, 'religion is to God and the nation is to the people,'" said *Halab*, an Aleppo newspaper that, on behalf of the British, propagandized for Arab nationalism in the northern Syrian city, which had a strong orientation toward the defeated Ottoman Empire in the years after the Arab Revolt of the first world war.¹³⁴ It was all part of the European plan to use the imperial ambitions of the Hashemite *sharif* of Mecca, Hussein ibn Ali (1852-1931), and his sons Abdullah (1882-1951) and Faysal (1883-1933), leaders of the Arab Revolt, to slice up the defeated Turkish-controlled Muslim Ottoman Empire and replace it with a new Arab identity and a new Arab ideology.¹³⁵

The paper and its masters needed to obscure the religious bond between Arabic- and Turkish-speaking Muslims and thereby disengage the newly imagined ethnicities from a dependence on Islam ... [which] presages the entire postcolonial ambivalence with Islam itself in Kemalist Turkey and Ba'athist Syria and Iraq, where Islam both is (or was) a definitive component of identity.

Islam was thus subsumed *into*, rather than separated *from*, the emerging "Arab" identity,¹³⁶ as this "imagined community" took shape in the inter-war Middle East. As Dawn put it of the early Arabist thinkers, "All talked about fatherland and patriotism, *watan* and *wataniyya*, but one person could have more than one *watan* and more than one nation (*umma*)."¹³⁷ The dualism was possible because Islam is a "discursive tradition" that includes aspects of secularism and religion side-by-side.¹³⁸ All Muslims consider themselves part of the greater *umma* but there is no "*Homo Islamicus*,"¹³⁹ no clearly defined *species* of Muslim that is separated from the ethnicities from which its adherents are drawn. "We ... made you into nations and tribes," says the *Qur'an* (49:13) and, as cultural psychologist Geert Hofstede observes: "We all think according to our own local software."¹⁴⁰

It is important to understand precisely what we mean when we use terms related to the development of political thought in the Arab world. For the most part, Arab nationalism, Arabism and pan-Arab(ism, ist), have been used interchangeably by journalists and scholars of the Middle East.¹⁴¹ The terms all broadly refer to the various iterations – Ba’athism, Nasserism, Arab Socialism, etc. – in which a linguistic and cultural commonality among Arabs manifests itself in the aspiration for political unity in an Arab nation that transcends existing nation-states.¹⁴² More recently, some scholars, such as Shibley Telhami, have argued that a “new” Arabism was emerging, born at the grassroots of society and nurtured by the region’s media, in which Arabs rallied around certain regional causes, such as Palestine.¹⁴³

Arab nationalists have not always been fixated on a pan-Arab political nation. During the Ottoman Empire, there were those who aspired to a heightened sense of Arab identity *within* the borders of the Ottoman state.¹⁴⁴ Pan-Arabism, Syrian nationalism, Egyptian nationalism; these are all manifestation of the Arabist impulse. In his history of the rise of the Arab middle class, Keith David Watenpaugh notes that Islamism emerged in the inter-war years in part as a reaction to the division of the Muslim Ottoman Empire into separate states and against “the nonsectarian, emancipatory, and bourgeois dimensions” of the liberal/Socialist orientation of Arab nationalism.¹⁴⁵ However, that did not preclude a simultaneous synergetic cooperation as Arabs of the two philosophies sought to crystallize their own identities in the new political environment. While his theories about the origin and impact of Arab nationalism have been widely criticized, Kedourie’s assessment of its later development is in line with that of other scholars. “On the level of practical politics, then, not only was there no opposition between Islam and Arabism, there was actual co-operation,” he wrote. “One can even go further and say that Islam actually gave great strength to Arab nationalism ... [and] ... produced a new theoretical amalgam in which Islam and Arabism became inseparable.”¹⁴⁶ For Graham Fuller, such a synergy is natural. “When Westerners talk about political ideals, they naturally hark back to the Magna Carta, the American Revolution, and the French Revolution. Muslims go back to the Koran and the Hadith to derive general principles about good governance (including the ruler’s obligation to consult the people) and concepts of social and economic justice,” he wrote.¹⁴⁷ The principle can be seen in the way in which Islamist modernists of the latter half of the 19th

century and first half of the 20th century, according to Charles Kurzman, turned to “a variety of sacred sources to establish the legitimacy of constitutionalism.”¹⁴⁸

The principle of *ijtihad*, which literally means “endeavor” or “self-exertion,” dictates that reason and independent judgment are used to articulate the applicable truths of the *Qur’an* that are relevant at any given time and place.¹⁴⁹ This fundamental concept is subject multiple interpretations and has been at the heart of Islamic theological debate for centuries.¹⁵⁰ The dominant Sunni tradition states that *sharia* (Holy Law) is “derived” from the sacred texts by learned Islamic jurists through “theological reflection and textual criticism and interpretation.”¹⁵¹ Thus the “fruit” of Islamic teachings is drawn from the textual roots. Both the Sunni and Shia traditions of Islam accept the *Qur’an* and the *Sunna* as sources of knowledge. To those, Sunnis add the consensus of the Companions of the Prophet and those of earlier generations of Muslim scholars.

The Shia include among the sources of knowledge the twelve infallible Imams, who are considered descendents of the Prophet’s cousin and daughter.¹⁵² The Shia also add another human element to the equation. In contrast to the Sunnis, the Shia recognize human intuition as a source of ethical-legal values, based on a “function bond between sacred text and rational intuition,” and they posit the infallible doctrine of the Imam, which equates the word of the divinely-inspired Imams with that of the Prophet.¹⁵³ This belief system produced the concept of *Velayat-e faqih*, the Guardianship of the Jurist, through which Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini (1902-1989) ruled Iran after the Islamic Revolution. Disagreements over the specifics of the sources of *ijtihad* are not confined to differences between the two main branches of Islam. Even among the Sunnis, there is significant debate over the issue of interpretation. A conservative minority maintains that the “gates of *ijtihad*” were closed after the tenth century, with some jurists reluctant to claim the same measure of competence as their predecessors,¹⁵⁴ and others contend that “the corpus of Islamic law had developed to the extent that it was capable of catering to all needs of the time.”¹⁵⁵ Writers such as W.B. Hallaq, in contrast, maintain that historically “not only was *ijtihad* favoured by Sunni jurists, but those jurists and schools of thought which were opposed to the exercise of *ijtihad* were ostracized from Sunni jurisprudence and, indeed, from Sunnism as a whole,”¹⁵⁶ while Mohammad Iqbal (1877-1938) argued that the very notion that the gates of independent

reasons had closed was “nonsense.”¹⁵⁷ The argument for the continuing validity of *ijtihad* underpins the demands of those seeking political reform in Saudi Arabia¹⁵⁸ and it can also be seen in the broader context of legal reforms across the Muslim world.¹⁵⁹ “Reading and understanding the *Qur’an* implies the interpretation of it and the interpretation in its turn includes the application of it which must be in the light of the existing circumstances and the changing needs of the world,” Pakistani Judge Mohammed Shafi wrote in a 1995 legal ruling.¹⁶⁰

For many Muslims, this viewpoint leaves open significant maneuvering room when it comes to the application of Islam to the political environment of the day – and when assessing the nature of his/her own political identity. Technology has only amplified that maneuvering room as traditional mosque-based communications networks have been supplanted by the internet and satellite television, where “all manner of organized expression, shades of opinion, and positions on subjects both theological and pragmatic can now be found.”¹⁶¹ Where *ijtihad* was once the purview of *ulema* (religious scholars, from the root *‘ilm*), miriam cooke¹⁶² and Bruce B. Lawrence have written, “migrant engineer theologians changed all that by distributing authority among Muslim cybernauts.”¹⁶³ As a result, Muslims began looking at their religion, and themselves, in new ways.

According to Muqtedar Khan, a central aspect of Islamism is “the search for Islamic identity in the modern world.”¹⁶⁴ That search for identity is part of a process of accommodating other aspects of identity into the “Islamic” self. For an Egyptian, an Iranian, an Indonesian, a Pakistani or a Nigerian, that search will, by definition, mean melding an ethnic and or nationalist identity into the Islamic whole, producing what Smith calls “concentric circles of allegiance.”¹⁶⁵ Sudanese Islamist leader and bin Laden ally Hasan Turabi use much the same term – substituting “identification” for “allegiance” – explaining that Arabism and Islamism are tied together by “a feeling of solidarity as well as by common interests.”¹⁶⁶ Halliday says that for an Arab, there are at least three separate “forms of identity:”

...‘religious’ or confessional (Muslim or Christian or, till the 1940s not to be forgotten, Jewish); ‘pan-Arab’, defined in terms of the whole Arab *umma* or nation; and local, defined in terms of particular states...¹⁶⁷

Arabs, said the columnist Samir Kassir (1960-2005), have “a gift for synthesis,” which meant that historically “Arab society was able to absorb the cultures of the Islamized peoples and not negate them in the process.”¹⁶⁸ Contrary to some nationalist teleology, he wrote, it is essential to recognize “how much more important Islam was than ethnicity as a unifying bond” in Arab history;¹⁶⁹ this acceptance of the role of Islamic tradition from a man who charged that modern Islamism had “discredited” Arab culture by uniting its members “in a cult of misery and death.”¹⁷⁰

Cultural philosopher Walter Ong famously observed that all human beings are the product of their times, since we are shaped by our “sense of identity, if we take sense of identity to mean the sense of where one comes from and how one relates to those other than oneself, how one fits into what one knows of the universe.”¹⁷¹ Sheikh Yusuf Qaradawi, a conservative Muslim cleric who was one of the closest disciples of Hassan al-Banna, who hosts a program religion and society on Al-Jazeera,¹⁷² says much the same:

Culture is not a pure abstract knowledge; it is knowledge and cognitions mixed with values and beliefs, embodied in actions, and reflected in arts and literatures, which are learned and experienced. It is influenced by religion, language environment and cultural and civilizational legacies, as well as by interaction, positive and negative, with others.¹⁷³

In its purest form, Islamism may reject nationalism as an artificial source of identity, as Khan contends, but few Muslims in the real world are able to so easily shed the more prosaic aspects of their identity. If one were to ask a Muslim on any continent to describe him or herself, it is unlikely he or she would stop at “Muslim.” Even if Islam ranks as the primary self-identity, any description would likely include reference to his/her country, ethnicity and possibly even region, village, family and, in the case of a woman, husband’s family. Each constitutes a separate but interwoven layer of identity.

Rashid Khalidi argues that those who accept the “reductionist nature” of much scholarship on Arab nationalism “which uncritically accepts the grandiose self-assessments of the power and pervasiveness of Arab nationalism” are left incapable of explaining the “ascendancy of Islamic radicalism and nation-state nationalism in the Arab world.” The pre-

World War I Middle East, he maintains, was an “amalgam of local, national, transnational and religious loyalties.”¹⁷⁴

And what is true of the individual is equally true of the *Volksgeist* or collective identity of a people.¹⁷⁵ Egypt provided one example. “Pharaonism” which tied the country to its pre-Islamic past, was “the emotional pivot of Egyptian territorial nationalism.” Yet it co-existed with what Gershoni and Jakowski, in their study of Egyptian nationalism, call “supra-Egyptianism, which was “a set of cultural and ethnic imaginings based on Islamic, Arab and Eastern” concepts. “[W]hile no supra-Egyptian national imagining totally rejected the existence of a distinct Egyptian state,” the authors wrote, “all presupposed the existence of a larger community to which Egyptians belonged.”¹⁷⁶

Anthony Smith maintains that Muhammad and Moses have become “national” leaders. He agrees that nations still lie at the core of political identity but argues that there is a duality between religion and nationalist politics, in which one taps the yearning for collective salvation beyond this world, while the other feeds on a desire for political redemption for future generations.

It is the achievement of nationalism to have given political expression to these twin appropriations by linking the memories of ethno-history and the older religious myths of election to the striving for collective territorial recognition and political autonomy in the historic ‘homeland.’¹⁷⁷

Though Smith was not specifically writing of the Middle East, his comments perfectly sum up the “complex and mutually reinforcing” relationship between transnational Islam and the modern Middle East state,¹⁷⁸ exemplified by the way in which religion has, in recent years, become a driving factor in Palestinian nationalism.¹⁷⁹ Even as they denounce Arab nationalism in sermons in the mosque, on the Internet and in audio cassettes that circulate in the region, radical Islamist clerics can be heard speaking of the “Arab world,” the “Arab *umma*” and the “Arab peoples.”¹⁸⁰

“Even as scholarly traditions of Islam have converged,” says Robert Hefner, in contrasting Islamic culture in the Middle East and Asia, “most of what goes on in

the national political arena shows the distinctive influence of country-specific state structures, alliances, and conflicts.”¹⁸¹

A series of surveys conducted by Moaddel in 2001 and 2003 found that while roughly three-quarters of Saudis, Jordanians and Egyptians considered religion to be the most important aspect of their identity, nationality rather than Arab identity was the second most common response, with just nine percent of Saudis and Jordanians and one percent of Egyptians responding positively to the statement, “Above all, I am an Arab.”¹⁸² “It thus appears that after religion, territorial nationalism is the distant second most important component of identity for the publics of these countries,” the study concluded.¹⁸³

For many Islamists, the Arab world holds a special place in the Muslim cosmology. “I want to say that the greatest glory in the Muslim conquests goes to the Arabs, and that religion grew, and became great through them; their foundation is the strongest, their light is the brightest, and they are indeed the best *umma*,” wrote Rashid Rida (1865-1935), an early and influential Muslim Brotherhood figure.¹⁸⁴ Arabic is the language of the *Qur’an*, Arabia gave birth to Islam; the modern Muslim identity cannot be grasped independent of modern Arab history.¹⁸⁵ Indeed, the heritage of Islam and the Arabs are bound as if by a spiritual umbilical cord.

4) THE POLITICS OF MANIPULATION

“The language of religion, nation and state are readily conflated within the communal discourse of modern politics, and this informs a variety of ideologies used by both state and opposition alike,” observes Scott Hibbard, who believes that this helps to explain “the ubiquity of religious politics in the modern era.”¹⁸⁶ For evidence, one need look no further than the fact that the Arab Revolt against the Ottoman caliphate at the beginning of World War I was proclaimed in the name of Islam by Prince Faysal ibn Husayn, the third son of the Hashemite Sharif of Mecca a choice that probably had more to do with crass regional politics than faith in Allah. Contributing to this synergy of interests was the fact that before the caliphate collapsed, Ottoman authorities were keen to foster Islamic solidarity against the same European authorities against whom the nationalists were organizing.¹⁸⁷ In his recordings of Arab nationalist rallies in Cairo in 1959, Lebanese diplomat and historian Elie Salem found the slogans thick with Islamic sentiment: “On one

occasion, every slogan was preceded by the Muslim battle cry, *Allahu akhbar* (God is greater). The *Allahu akhbar* was followed by proclamations such as these: 'Arab nationalism is a faith, a religion;' 'Arab nationalism is a struggle against communism;' 'Arabism and Islam.'"188

Juan Cole reminds us that opposition to a colonial or post-colonial Other "allows actually diverse local populations to sustain an illusion of relative homogeneity against the hegemonic foreigner, adding to incipient 'national' cohesion."¹⁸⁹ His insertion of quotation marks around the word "national" distinguishes the structure of the nation-state from the idea of the nation, as emphasized by Tibi, Zubaida and others.¹⁹⁰ Charles Smith argues that nationalism and nation can be distinguished from the idea of the state, "the latter considered a product of historical and institutional developments that might or might not be identified with a people who consider themselves a nation, "that "dual identities" are a reality and that it is possible for cultural and linguistic affinities to be distinct from national identity."¹⁹¹

Notable in the context of this study of Arab journalists, is the fact that it was with the founding of the newspaper *Nafir Suria* by Boutros al-Boustani (1819-1883), following sectarian clashes in Mount Lebanon in 1860, that some of the early ideas of Arab nationalism were first elucidated, setting the stage for the intermingling of journalism and Arab/Muslim politics still seen today.¹⁹² The mission of those early Arab journalists "was defense of their liberty, of independence, or Arab unity and of renaissance," according to Ghassan Tuani, one of the most respected figures in modern Arab journalism.¹⁹³ Ami Ayalon, an Israeli historian of the Arab media, argues that when someone chose to become a journalist in that period, "he in fact chose to join a battle" and journalists of the period "came to regard fighting for a cause as their primary objective, conveying information as merely a secondary task."¹⁹⁴

Al-Boustani called for "non-sectarian patriotism" and the separation of state and religion, drawing on and adapting the concept of *watan* that Rifaa al-Tahtawi (1801-1873) had brought back from Europe three decades before. Maronite Christians and Egyptian Copts – academics, journalists and other intellectuals – were among those shaping the ideas of Arab nationalism, as well as the nation-state nationalisms of Syria and Egypt. This is a dissertation about the attitudes of Muslim Arab journalists, not a history of the Arab media, but it is nonetheless worthwhile to point out that Christian Arabs journalists played an

important part in developing and propagating the concepts of Arab nationalism. These included men like the Syrian Greek Catholic Takia brothers, who founded Egypt's *Al-Ahram*; the al-Boustani family, who owned several influential Beirut newspapers; Farah Atun (1874-1922), a Syrian Greek Orthodox journalist whose "seminal ideas" are credited with helping to introduce "the idea of a common Arab society;"¹⁹⁵ and Yaqub Sarruf (1852-1927) and Faris Nimr (1856-1951), American University of Beirut professors who published *Al-Muqtataf* in Beirut until fallout from a commencement speech about Darwinism eventually forced them out of the university.¹⁹⁶ The pair, along with partner Shahin Makarius (1864-1933), left for Cairo where they together published *Al-Muqattam*, a newspaper whose neutral stance would later spark "violent expression of the disapproval of the nationalists" who claimed that it collaborated with the British against the Egyptian nationalist cause.¹⁹⁷ Beirut's Jesuits published at least eight newspapers¹⁹⁸ and most Palestinian newspapers of the late 19th and early 20th centuries were also edited by Christians.¹⁹⁹

Meanwhile, like Kawakibi, a variety of *Islamist* journalists also helped to propagate the ideas of Arab nationalism. So, too, Islamist activists like Salafi Sheikh 'Izz al-Din al-Qassam (1882-1935), head of one of the most famous resistance units of the 1938 Palestine revolt, who was also closely associated with the pan-Arabist Istiqlal (Independence) Party.²⁰⁰

The best example of the "symmetry" of philosophies²⁰¹ between Islamism and Arab nationalism involves the Muslim Brotherhood – which inspired modern Islamists – and the best-known proponents of Arab nationalism, the Syrian Ba'ath Party, the Iraqi Ba'ath and Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser (1918-1970). The aforementioned "conventional wisdom" would have it that the secular Ba'ath was the archenemy of Islam. The historical record indicates differently. In the view of the Ba'ath's Orthodox Christian co-founder, Michel Aflaq (1910-1989), "Islam was not only a divine religious system, but also an expression of the genius of the Arab model." Ghada Hashem Talhami explains Aflaq's thinking:

Since the Arab nation is eternal, renewing itself across human history, then Arab nationalism is one of its latest manifestations in the current historical stage. Thus, nationalism reaches its zenith only when it reunites with historical Islam, since both are no more than manifestations of the nation in two distinct times.²⁰²

As Antonius notes, "Broadly speaking, every country which became permanently arabised [sic] also became permanently islamicized [sic]."²⁰³ It can be argued that crass politics was behind attempts by the Ba'ath and other Arab nationalist movements to present Islam as a central tenet of Arabism.²⁰⁴ "The beauty of Aflaq and [Ba'ath co-founder Zaki al-] Arsuzi [an Alawite] is that they just tweaked God a little to make him a source of nationalism and Ba'thi '*al-risala al-khalida*' or the 'eternal message,'" according to Syria scholar Joshua Landis.²⁰⁵ Yet, however opportunistic such "tweaking" might have been, there is no escaping the fact that the Greek Orthodox Aflaq converted to Islam before his death, which would seem to indicate that, for him at least, the connection with Islam was more than just an expedient.²⁰⁶ Egypt, meanwhile, offered a vivid example of the complex and often opportunistic relationship between Islamism and Arab nationalism. There, the Muslim Brotherhood, which was founded in Egypt in 1928, supported Gamal Abdel Nasser's overthrow of the monarchy. The Brotherhood's leading philosopher, Sayyid Qutb, even became known as "the tribune of the Egyptian Revolution." "There is no conflict between Arab nationalism and Islamic patriotism if we understand Arab nationalism as a step on the road," he wrote at the time.²⁰⁷ But there was no such understanding on the part of the Nasser's Free Officers, with whom the Brotherhood quickly came to blows after the coup. The confrontation ultimately led to the arrest of many officials of the Brotherhood and Qutb's execution (in the years immediately before his death, Qutb would sing a very different tune about the compatibility of Islam and nationalism than at the time of the revolution).²⁰⁸ In Syria, meanwhile, relations between political Islamists and successive nationalist regimes²⁰⁹ ultimately led to a bloody pogrom against Syrian Islamists in the early 1980s, which resulted in the virtual destruction of the city of Hama. But just as Arab nationalism and Islamism have had their fallings-out, so have the various ideological strains *within* Arab nationalism. It was, after all, the Syrian nationalism of the Parti Populaire Syrien (PPS) that rejected pan-Arabism in favor of Syrian nationalism in the 1930s and the Syrian Arab Socialists who sent Aflaq and his compatriots into exile in Iraq in the 1960s.²¹⁰

The ideology of Arab nationalism, as embodied in Egypt, Syria and the Iraqi Ba'ath regime, was dealt a body-blow with the Arab defeat in the 1967 war with Israel. For Nasser and Nasserism, it was, essentially, the end. Scott Hibbard argues that this marked the dawn

of a new phase in Arab politics. Struggling to find an alternate basis for legitimacy, Egypt and other Arab regimes began courting the Islamists.

By abandoning secular norms and liberal ideas, state elites sought to use a more explicit religious nationalism as a means of mobilizing popular sentiments behind a reconceived notion of state authority.²¹¹

This process was relatively seamless because even though state elites and conservative religious activists were in competition, "there was little difference in their respective visions of social order."²¹² In addition, the trans-border aspirations of the Islamists are "rooted in the same communalist orientation of ethnic nationalism."²¹³ Yet at the same time, many within the intelligentsia grew alienated and, writes Egyptian-born, London-based Islamist Basheer Nafi, as "the distance between the Arab intellectual and the state ... increased, the intellectuals' discourse grew more and more to resemble that of the Islamist."²¹⁴

It was also a continuation of the conscious readjustment in national worldview that Arab governments had long been engaged as they shifted emphasis between pan-Arabism (*qaumi*) and local identity (*qutri*) in the pursuit of changing domestic and regional agendas.²¹⁵ Egypt was the best example of this. In the 1960s, Nasser became the symbol of pan-Arab aspirations. Broadcasting on the Voice of the Arabs, he galvanized Arab nationalists across the region.²¹⁶ Yet he was, first and foremost, an Egyptian patriot whose regional stance, according to biographer P.J. Vatikiotis, was a conscious manipulation of the Arab imagination in a quest for regional power: "[I]n the final analysis Nasser's Arab nationalism was more of a deliberate choice of state policy that promoted Egypt's leadership in the Arab world than an abstract ideological preference."²¹⁷ Meanwhile, back in Cairo, writes Dawisha,

Egyptian, rather than Arab, nationalism continued to be the dominant ideology. Its roots dug so deep into the Egyptian soul that even by the end of the 1950s, the decade that witnessed the greatest triumphs of Arab nationalism under Egypt's own leadership, observers would note Egyptian indifference to the Arab identity.²¹⁸

Dawisha quotes Muhammad Hussein Heikal, Nasser's journalistic confident, as commenting that Egypt, the natural leader of the Arab world,²¹⁹ "was unable to shift its attention from its own soil so that it can look across the Sinai and discover its Arab position."²²⁰

5) MEDIA AND IDEOLOGY

In the context of the current study, it is important to note that, as in the shifting between *qaumi* and *qutri*, the flirtation by nationalist Arab governments with political Islam beginning in the 1980s meant that the same state-dominated media outlets which had long been used to propagate the pan-Arab, Socialist and nationalistic ideals of these secular regimes were now required to shift gears and the produce a kind of "ideological re-traditionalization,"²²¹ normalizing the new agenda of what Nasser's successor in Egypt, Anwar Sadat (1918-1981), called the "corrective movement." In Damascus, for example, then-Syrian President Hafiz al-Assad (1930-2000) publicly adopted the symbols of Islam by, among other things, ordering that state-run television broadcast his weekly visits to the capital's largest mosques.²²²

For Sadat, this flirtation with the Muslim Brotherhood, even as he made peace with Israel, would eventually backfire, forcing him to crack down on Islamist critics. That move would cost him his life at the hands of a militant Islamist splinter group headed by Ayman Zawahiri, who would later emerge as Osama bin Laden's right-hand man and a principle architect of 9/11. Yet, a quarter of a century later, the complex, mutually-reinforcing,²²³ yet ambivalent relationship between the regime and the Islamists would continue: the Brotherhood would control nearly twenty percent of the seats in the Egyptian parliament despite the fact that it was officially banned, while some 15,000 people, many of them Islamists, were held prison without trial under the country's emergency laws.

6) A NEW ARABISM?

"Their god had ... failed, spectacularly so. It had been called Arabism, or Arab nationalism, or pan-Arabism," Israeli academic Martin Kramer wrote in one of the many obituaries for Arab nationalism published in the wake of the 1990-91 Gulf war,²²⁴ during which Saddam Hussein, one of the last of the Ba'athists, held high the banner of Arab nationalism. "The authoritarian state, the nihilistic opposition: the middle ground has been

scorched," Fouad Ajami, who had been declaring the "end of pan-Arabism" since the 1970s, pronounced as if from on-high. It was all because, Ajami said, the "new classes, half-educated and bewildered, [had] sought to simplify the world around them."²²⁵

But others saw a different future. In 1992, As'ad AbuKhalil wrote of the surfacing of an "emotional unity, *wihdat hal* (unity of situation)" among Arabs. He saw this unity as the kernel around which a new Arab ideology would coalesce, with three "organically linked components: Arab nationalism, Islam, and democratization."²²⁶ Subsequent events – 9/11, the US invasion of Afghanistan, the Iraq war and the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah – have only underlined the commonality of interests and shared sense of identity among all Arabs.²²⁷ As Arab-American leader James Zogby put it, reporting on a 2006 poll that showed a significant downturn in the mood in the Arab world, "The people of the Arab world are organically linked not only by geography, history and culture. They are tied by sentiment, as well."²²⁸ Whether supporters of democratic change or the political status quo; secularists or devout Muslims; all are today on the defensive, rallying in the face of the American and Israeli Other, off balance and adrift. "[T]he blurring of Palestine and Iraq has ... swamped the self-image of the Arabs of the Middle East – and the image the world has of them – in a tide of blood," the late Lebanese journalist Samir Kassir wrote.²²⁹

There today exists a duality of identity, overlapping and often deeply intertwined, in which Arab and Islam are inseparable. Says Al-Jazeera reporter Hassan Ibrahim, "Arab nationalism and fundamentalism, thanks to George Bush have become the same. The invasion of Iraq really galvanized the masses, made them feel that their identity as Arabs is being threatened."²³⁰ This phenomenon is made more vivid by a heightened sense of Islamic identity in some quarters as the old ideas have been discredited and the promises of secular government have proven empty. "People have come to identify themselves more as Muslims during the last five years in response to the US-led 'war on terrorism,'" confirms Diaa Rashwan, an Egyptian specialist on Islamic movements.²³¹ Unity in the face of adversity; it is always thus. "There is an implicit consciousness of common notions – an underlying framework of language, ideas, and values which, while not always self-evident or explicitly expressed, becomes apparent when the shared assumptions are violated or attacked," Dale Eickelman and James Piscatori have observed.²³² It is a shared consciousness

shaped, in part, by the television screen, as adherents of every *ism* take part in the electronically-shared experience of siege by the Other, communicated via the common language of Modern Standard Arabic, which has become “a symbol of pan-Arabism” and “the only code of the ‘serious’ genre of news and debates.”²³³ The result is what Khalil Rinnawi somewhat flippantly calls McArabism²³⁴ – “a pan-Arab, regional expression of Arab identity conveyed through Arab transnational television” that invokes “Islamic symbols and religious elements”²³⁵ – and Israeli researcher Barry Rubin more awkwardly terms “national Islamism.”²³⁶

Halliday sees “immense significance” for the Middle East in this “combination of nationalism and religious militancy” that converged “in a composite, or overlapping, response to the outside world.” The result, he says, is that Islamists are “more than willing to espouse the causes that nationalists” uphold.²³⁷

7) “POST-ISLAMIST” THEORY

Peter Mandaville’s theory of “post-Islamism” provides one framework through which to understand the complex relationship between Arabism and Islamism.²³⁸ Post-Islamism is most closely identified with French theorists Gilles Kepel and Olivier Roy, who argue that, as in the title of Roy’s best-known work,²³⁹ political Islam has proven a “failure” that has led to a schism between Islamist radicals and the majority of Muslims, undercutting the movement’s political power, creating new – sometimes mutually-hostile – forms of religious radicalism and, at the same time, an increasingly sectarian focus on the practicalities of gaining political ground within the confines of the existing nation-state. In short, a shifting of priorities from Allah to country. “The Islamist myth was that of the unification of the religious and the political; post-Islamism means that both spheres are autonomous,” Roy explains.²⁴⁰

The result, as he describes it, sounds much like nationalism, with the “reinforcement of ‘imagined identities’” and a struggle for power driven by “the logical of national or ethnic interests” alongside the rise of “multiple forms of religious revivalism.”²⁴¹ In the Middle East, this “Islamism-nationalism” can be seen in the precedence of political interest over religion in Iran, in Hamas’ focus on nation over religion in Palestine, in Hezbollah’s political alliance with Lebanese Christians and in a host of other examples from Yemeni unification

to the disparate attitudes of Islamist groups toward Iraq's 1990 invasion of Kuwait. In fact, Roy and Kepel both trace the splintering of the Islamist movement to the arrival of US troops in Saudi Arabia to counter that invasion, just as Roy believes that the second Palestinian intifada a decade later "contributed to the blurring of the divide between nationalists and Islamists everywhere in the Arab Middle East, and has favoured a renewal of Arab nationalism."²⁴² The ultimate result of this transformation of Muslim politics is that Islamist movements are largely nationalist in orientation, have abandoned pan-Islamic rhetoric and, by refocusing on issues of democracy and civil society, have inadvertently brought about a "*de facto* secularization" of their societies.²⁴³

Kepel traces a "trail of decline" as far back as the 1950s when nationalist regimes turned against the Islamists and modernity created new pressures, through what he describes as the collapse of the Taliban under the weight of its own internal contradictions. In the Islamist suicide bombings of the past quarter century he sees only desperation, and believes that even 9/11 backfired on the radicals, further undercutting their political influence.²⁴⁴ Six years after *Jihad: The Trail of Political Islam* was first published, the resurgence of Taliban influence in Afghanistan, the turmoil in Pakistan, the political power Hamas has demonstrated at the polls and the military-political ascendancy of Hezbollah in Lebanon are among many signs that such a doomsday scenario for Islamism may be somewhat overstated, leading Kepel himself to recast his predictions. The "gigantic confusion" and internal contradictions of the Islamist movement "may have generated the conditions for its own obsolescence," he wrote in an article published in 2000.

Islamist movements and parties at the turn of the 21st century are striving to reinvent themselves as democratic movements, to denounce the repression they feel they have been victim to. They now invoke the universal rights of man instead of critiquing them with their own substitute visions, and they support the previously decried values of the impious West, like freedom of expression and women's liberties.

The "plasticity" that had allowed Islam to adapt through the ages, together with a polishing of Islam's "social credentials," Kepel now predicted, could together "support the birth of a new Islamic democracy – an admixture of culture, religion, and political and

economic modernity.”²⁴⁵ In a very real way, this debate recaptures the essence of the earlier clashes between the “modernists” and the “fundamentalists” just as the new synergy between the more “liberal” view of political Islam and that of Arabism represents a completion of a cycle that saw them diverge in the era of authoritarian rule from the late 1950s through the 1980s.

That is precisely the contention of Peter Mandaville, who sees in the complex array of shifting forces not the death of political Islam, but the birth of a “new Islamism,” that is the evolutionary product of the transformation of politics in the Middle East and broader Islamic world, replacing what Ray Baker, another theorist of the new Islamism, has called an “Islam of fear”²⁴⁶ with one that seeks practical solutions to the needs of the body politic:

The “new Islamists,” with their emphasis on pragmatism and policy rather than public virtue, are seeking to redress [the traditional focus on moral strictures] by figuring Islam as a discourse of progress and social justice.²⁴⁷

While Mandaville readily acknowledges that some Islamist groups cling to a pan-Islamist agenda, he argues that overall, Muslim political identities are today “oriented primarily towards national or even local concerns.”²⁴⁸

He is not alone in this assessment. Graham Fuller, Asaf Bayat, and others see political Islam in throes of transition, with a new “pragmatic” agenda emerging. In a non-Arab context, Turkey’s Islamist government, which came to power in the first decade of the 21st century, is held up as a living example of the trend.²⁴⁹ “[T]he Islamists have a knack for tailoring the message to changing circumstances. Over the last 15 years or so, the message has been the failure of the all-providing nation-state, created by the populist-military regimes as well as by traditional monarchies,” says Israeli academic Emmanuel Sivan.²⁵⁰ In recent Islamist discourse, according to Halliday, can be heard a code of contemporary politics and social order that tracks those of other political movements:

These needs are evident and secular enough: the desire to challenge or retain state power; the need to mobilize dominated, usually urban, populations for political action; the articulation of a nationalist ideology against foreign domination and those within the society associated with it; ... the carrying

out of social and political reforms designed to strengthen the state in the post-revolutionary period.²⁵¹

The leader of the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood gives credence to that view. “[O]ur movement started with *daawa*, calling the public to join Islam and understanding its teachings. That was the early phase of the Brothers’ activities,” according to Dr. Ishaq A. Farhan, leader of Hizb Jibhih al-Amal al-Islam. “In the second phase, we emphasized education and charity work. Now, we are in the phase of political participation.”²⁵²

Where Kepel sees an abandonment of Islam in this emphasis on traditionally secular social issues – human rights, free expression, a gradualist approach to power-seeking – Mandaville sees a new pragmatism. “Post-Islamism is neither anti-Islamic, un-Islamic, nor is it secular,” he insists:

“[M]oving beyond Islamism – like moving beyond the state – means the erasure of the boundaries that supposedly constitute ‘religion’ and ‘politics’ as separate domains in the first place. ... [It] is not an abandonment of Muslim politics, but rather [its] reconstitution in forms more suited to a globalized world – a world in which ... the state is only one among many sites of the politics.”²⁵³

This alliance is not unknown in the history of nationalism. According to Hastings, “religion has produced the dominant character of some state-shaped nations and of some nationalisms.”²⁵⁴

8) POLITICAL ECONOMY

Any discussion of media and the Arab world must factor in the issue of political economy, which is inherently bound up in nationalist theories about the role of modernity in the formation of “nations.” Political economy is defined as “the management of the economic affairs of the state,” and, in at least some descriptions, there are strong parallels with Anderson’s imagined community, in that “this system links persons otherwise independent: *strangers rather than relatives*” within “boundaries of want satisfaction” that are, in essence, the products of a new way of imagining the possible.²⁵⁵

In the Middle East, some economists have argued that political economy – with its complex mix of domestic, regional and global pressures – is at least as important as geo-political factors in the “game” being played on the regional stage, and, in fact, often underpin those maneuvers. In this “kingdom of international political economy,” as Halliday calls it, political and economic considerations function side-by-side in forging regional relations. The “national” interest, in the sense of the solid boundaries of nation-states, coexists with the more ethereal “imagined community.” “In both regional and extra-regional relations power, shared values or ‘Arabness’ (*‘uraba*) has been at least as important as the case for co-operation,” according to Halliday.²⁵⁶ Yet this connection should not be romanticized. State-to-state economic relations are often based on coercion, as the ‘haves’ seek to dictate the politics of the ‘have nots;’ the populations of poor nations such as Egypt and Yemen harbor deep resentment for the rich sheikhs of the Gulf; and, aside from the arguable exception of the Gulf Cooperation Council, regional economic cooperation has never shifted from an idea to a reality, with competition between competing business elites even undermining cooperation within the United Arab Emirates. The powerful elites, who Halliday brutally characterizes as “organized groups of robbers,” have dug in, even as the growth of regional corporations, backed by wealthy Arab investors and foreign capital, has produced what economists Alan Richards and John Waterbury call “a creeping accountability.”²⁵⁷

In recent years, transnational Arab media has played an increasingly important role in shaping the way Arabs see this complex landscape and their role therein. And those elites mentioned above have, in turn, helped shape the way the media presents it all. Robert McChesney, one of the preeminent scholars of the political economy of the media, argues that media is central to the emergence of a global economy. He says “bogus assumptions” that press freedom dynamically emerges when media systems become internationalized “fog our ability to see the actual power relations at hand.”²⁵⁸

McChesney and many of the other leading theorists in the field, such as Edward Herman, Noam Chomsky, Herbert Schiller, and Pradip Thomas, write from the perspective of the left.²⁵⁹ To them, it is self-evident that media is also a tool of the powers-that-be as they seek to cement their political-economic hold. “The conglomerate capitalist control over

cultural and communications industries represents and expresses the triumph of private profit over collective need, corporate strategy over democratic direction,” according to Peter Golding.²⁶⁰

For McChesney,

Media fare is ever more closely linked to the needs and concerns of a handful of enormous and powerful corporations, with annual revenues approaching the GDP of a small nation. These firms are run by wealthy managers and billionaires with clear stakes in the outcome of the most fundamental political issues.²⁶¹

McChesney was writing primarily about the US, but media “revolutions” that denationalize and regionalize media in the developing world often take on a similar pattern that, according to one global study, frequently leads to a “attempts by powerful, regional media corporations” to achieve “the transnationalization and conglomeration of cultural industries through the ownership of networks, distribution channels and production/content.”²⁶²

In the Middle East, corporate media feudalism is producing ownership patterns involving cronyism and blood ties that link governments and the emerging media conglomerates, which, as Naomi Sakr notes, offer “ruling elites a means to expand their power base.”²⁶³ In this case, media owners – such as the government of Qatar, mega-wealthy Saudi royals and political movements like Hezbollah – do not respond solely, or, it can be argued, even secondarily, to the exigencies of the marketplace.

There is much at stake. The end game in this process strikes directly at the heart of nationalism theory, as each country struggles to protect what media law scholar Monroe Price has called “its own bubble of identity,” even as traditional notions of place, time and space fall away, blurring “traditional boundaries and established notions of community.”²⁶⁴ The international media market is, according to Price, an increasingly interdependent site where new rules are emerging that

shape common narratives, a space in which ideologies compete and forge allegiances that ultimately determine the persistence of governments and nations themselves, and an arena where imagery becomes a supplement or substitute for force.²⁶⁵

Human capital is another element of political economy relevant to any discussion of national identity and the Middle East. The mobility that came with the industrial revolution contributed to the emergence of new forms of identity as the newly enlarged range of employability became what Gellner calls “the natural political boundary” of identity. Today, he writes, the regional and global marketplace has produced a class of workers who, no matter their nation of birth, “speak each others’ language.” Once the “driving force” for nineteenth century nationalism, these intellectuals today “move with the greatest ease, with the least prejudice” across borders, with important implications for the evolution of ‘national’ identity.²⁶⁶ Writing elsewhere about the dilemmas facing Islam in the modern age, Gellner observed, “Occupational diversity and mobility – *that* is the new order.”²⁶⁷

That new order can be seen in the huge migrations of blue collar labor from poor, heavily populated countries like Egypt, to help build – and keep the sand away from – the sparking skyscrapers of the Arabian Gulf, while highly-educated Palestinians, Lebanese, Syrians and citizens of the countries of North Africa toil as accountants, managers, engineers and journalists in those same skyscrapers.²⁶⁸

The result, as anyone who has ever sat on a flight between Cairo and the Gulf can attest, is what Anderson called the “countless, ceaseless travels” that contribute to the rise of an imagined community.²⁶⁹

CHAPTER III: ISLAM, KNOWLEDGE AND COMMUNICATION

[L]et not the scribe refuse to write: as Allah has taught him, so let him write.

AL-QUR'AN (2:282)²⁷⁰

1) COMMUNICATION AND THE QUR'AN

"Read!" So commanded the angel Gabriel in the first word of the first revelation, which was communicated to the Prophet Muhammad in a cave outside Mecca in 610 C.E. The instruction is recorded in the 96th chapter of the *Qur'an*:

"Read (or Proclaim!) in the name of your Lord and Cherisher who created - Created man out of a (mere) clot of congealed blood: Proclaim! And your Lord is Most Bountiful, - He Who taught (the use of) the Pen, - Taught the human that which he did not know." (96: 1-5)²⁷¹

Thus were laid the foundations of Islam's intimate connection with the written word. The Arabic terms for knowledge, understanding, writing and reading are mentioned in almost 20 percent of the verses of the *Qur'an*, a mass medium known to the world long before Gutenberg (140-1468) invented his printing press.²⁷² "Islam realized the religious, political and economic importance of information fourteen centuries ago and organized its means, stated its goals and exhorted Muslims to make good use of it for the sake of their religion and their commonweal," Abdelhadi Boutaleb, director general of the Islamic Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO), wrote in advance of the first Islamic Information Ministers' Conference in 1986.²⁷³

'*Ilm*, a derivation of the Arabic root 'to know,' is "a defining concept of the worldview of Islam."²⁷⁴ It is generally translated to mean 'knowledge (of God)' and, implicitly, the communication of knowledge. "'*Ilm* was literally born in the first breath of Islam," according to Dagmar Glass, who conducted a review of 40 Arabic language publications examining Arab-Islamic information concepts, referring to *Surah* 96, al-Alaq,

considered by most scholars to be the first Revelation.²⁷⁵ Explains Ziauddin Sardar, author of several histories of information in the Muslim world, *'ilm*

is the pursuit of knowledge as well as the distribution and transmission of knowledge; it is the accumulation of knowledge as well as access to knowledge, it is data, information, knowledge and wisdom all rolled into one.²⁷⁶

"In Muslim cultural theory, knowledge is the key to the human condition and the power that drives human civilization," according to Syed Pasha of the State University of New York.²⁷⁷ He points out that while the *Qur'an* does not contain a single reference to the sword, the pen is mentioned four times.²⁷⁸ Along with *'ilm*, other aspects of Islamic notions of information discussed in the *Qur'an* and *hadith*, the collected accounts of the teachings and activities of the Prophet, include *ma'rifa* (knowledge or cognition), *aql* (intelligence), *ra'y* (opinion, view), *haqq* (reality, fact, truth), *khavar* and its plural, *akhbar* (news), *da'wa* (the call to God), and *hikma*, generally translated as "divine wisdom" but a word also associated with the Western concept of objectivity.²⁷⁹

In Islamic society, information has historically been considered not just a commodity, but a moral and ethical imperative.²⁸⁰ Muhyi al-Din Abd al-Halim, the leading information theorist at Egypt's al Azhar University and former head of Cairo University's faculty of Communications and Journalism, wrote in 1984 that information "provides the people ... with the truths of the Islamic religion on the basis of the book of God and the *Sunna* of his Messenger."²⁸¹ From the very beginning, the Prophet's own mosque in Medina was more than just a center of Islamic learning.

The Prophet's mosque ... was a spiritual centre for worship, the political and military headquarters of the new state where internal and external affairs were conducted, and institute of learning where discussions and seminars were held, and a social institution where Muslims learnt and practiced discipline, equality, unity and brotherhood.²⁸²

In short, it was the communications hub of the new community. In the mosque's courtyard, followers gathered to exchange news and debate political affairs.²⁸³ From there,

the Prophet carried out an active flow of communications with the outside world,²⁸⁴ dispatching missives to neighboring tribes and conducting diplomatic correspondence with the rulers of distant empires.²⁸⁵ There, too, he received emissaries, meeting them at a place today still marked by the Pillar of Embassies.²⁸⁶

Lebanese scholar Adub Muruwwa believes “the seeds of [Arab] journalism” were planted in Islam’s first century.²⁸⁷ A case can be made that it was within the confines of the Medina mosque that the first Muslim journalists began to practice their craft, as a bevy of scribes, directed by the Prophet’s secretary, Zaid ibn Thabit (610-656), copied down these dispatches and, more importantly in the context of the religion, transcribed portions of the revelations as dictated by the Prophet Muhammad.²⁸⁸ They were soon joined by the first Muslim broadcasters, for with the growth of that first small community, “transmitters” – individuals with powerful voices – were called upon to repeat the Prophet’s words for the crowds.²⁸⁹ In 632 C.E., two months before his death, Prophet Muhammad led what would be his last annual pilgrimage to Mecca, which would become known as the “Farewell Pilgrimage.” He was accompanied by more than 100,000 of his followers.²⁹⁰ As he gave his final sermon in the valley of Uranah in front of Mount Arafat,

The Prophet (peace be upon him) appointed a man called Rabi’ah bin Umaiah bin Khalaf al-Jumahi, who had a loud voice, to repeat after the Prophet (peace be upon him) so as to convey his words to the people.²⁹¹

These were then relayed by others across the crowd. In a modern-day commentary, Ziauddin Sardar gave this account of the scene:

[H]undreds of transmitters were positioned at key spots in the valley of Arafat near Makkah. As the Prophet spoke, the transmitters repeated his words sentence by sentence so that the whole valley resounded with the words of the Prophet and everyone present was able to hear what he was saying.²⁹²

After the Prophet’s death, the various disparate sections of the revelations were collected “from palm-branches, flat stones and the memories of men.”²⁹³ Traditions disagree on which of the Prophet’s first three successors – Abu Bakr (632–634), Umar (634–644),

Uthman (644–656) or Ali (599–661) – ordered that the revelations be assembled in one place and bound in leather.²⁹⁴ “The revelations were transcribed onto sheets (*suhuf*) of equal size, presumably made of parchment, which were then gathered in codices (*mushaf*),” according to Bloom.²⁹⁵ However, the result was a series of differing codices²⁹⁶ – which produced variant traditions, though Uthman is credited with canonizing one version and ordering the destruction of the others.²⁹⁷

Meanwhile, the compilation of the *hadith*, the accounts of the sayings and deeds of the Prophet as reported by his companions, raised an even more complex problem: assessing the legitimacy of the accounts as handed down orally through a chain of transmitters. Here issues of reportorial credibility, the cross-checking of sources and questions of political and ideological bias first enter the Islamic lexicon through a process known as *Rijal al-Hadith* (the study of the reporters of *hadith*).²⁹⁸

As Islam spread along the ancient trading routes that linked Arabia with Mesopotamia, Damascus and beyond, early forms of Islamic media – or sources of information – consisted of public speeches, councils, poetry readings and word-of-mouth in the market square. They were soon supplemented by more formal communications, such as sermons in mosques and, eventually, handwritten books and contracts, as a culture of writing emerged in the years following the Prophet’s death in 632,²⁹⁹ producing a “momentous change” in which “[w]riting came to play a crucial and pervasive role in virtually every aspect of life.”³⁰⁰ There emerged a new profession, the *warraqueen*, who combined the functions of scribe, publisher, bookseller and writer. “The end result,” according to Sardar, “was a cultural revolution based on the production of books on an unprecedented scale: the concept of ‘ilm was transformed into a truly distributive practice.”³⁰¹

By the fourteenth century AD on the Gregorian calendar, these “men of the pen” were among the most respected members of Muslim society.³⁰² However, concerned that the spread of the written word was opening the way to misinterpretation and distortion, and, some scholars argue, to safeguard their own authority, toward the end of that century, the *ulema* effectively transformed the meaning of ‘ilm from *all* knowledge to *religious* knowledge and set in place stringent criteria for who could transmit such knowledge. This is one of

several moments in history at which “the gates of *ijtihad*” are said to have closed. As part of this move, the *ulema* blocked the introduction of the printing press for hundreds of years, an action many scholars blame for the “stagnation” of Muslim culture.³⁰³

With the arrival of the first printed Arabic books via European colonizers in the seventeenth century and then the first Arabic newspapers in nineteenth century, Islamic – and Arab – discourse began to take on a new dimension,³⁰⁴ which was then revolutionized in the late twentieth century with the advent of broadcasting, audio cassettes, fax and ultimately satellite television and the avalanche of new media that have transformed communication, redefined Muslim identity politics and put control of *‘ilm* into the hands of anyone with a computer.³⁰⁵ “All of these media, whether they are traditional and of pre-Islamic and Islamic origin or modern and of Western origin, have one thing in common: They are all agents of social and intellectual change and have far-reaching effects on society and communication,” according to Glass.³⁰⁶

2) ISLAMIC THEORIES OF NEWS AND COMMUNICATION

There exists “a paucity of rigorous mass media theory and models in Muslim culture.”³⁰⁷ To the extent that they exist, Islamic perspectives on communication theory reflect more diversity than uniformity.³⁰⁸ The theoretical foundations of modern Arab-Islamic information sciences were laid in Cairo in the 1950s and 1960s. Glass divides Islamic information theorists into five primary groups: Those who largely base their thinking on Western models; those who focus on practical training for journalists in an academic setting; those who study media in Islamic history and pre-Islamic times; those who derive their theories from classical Arabic sources and advocate an “Islamic conceptualization of information,”³⁰⁹ and are strongly critical of the communication practices of Arab governments; and a final group, which emerged in the 1980s, who advocate “a sovereign, independent Arab concept of information.”³¹⁰ Islamic theorist Abd al-Latif Hamza defines *i’lam* (information) as:

providing the people with proper news, correct pieces of information and firm truths, which help the people to form a correct opinion of an event of problem. Furthermore, information is an objective expression of the mentality of the people, their inclinations and ambitions.³¹¹

In this framing, news both informs and *reflects* society as a whole, thus implying that the media must not be out of step with the values and mores of such society (e.g. it should not be politically – or, in this case, morally – incorrect). It is a role not far removed from the Western theory that the media is a mirror of the public to which it reports.³¹² However, it is notable that the Islamic approach calls for the media to actively “form” or shape “a correct opinion” in the minds of the news consumers, hence a pro-active stance built on a specific agenda, in this case *da’wa*, the Muslim call to follow the straight path to God. Not all Islamic information theoreticians agree that information is necessarily the “objective expression of the mentality of the people.” Amara Najib and others argue that information can also reflect the views of political authorities, who thus twist *da’wa* into *di’aya*, nonreligious propaganda, with the “correct opinion” being transformed into disinformation. Indeed, the use of information as a tool of politics is enshrined in the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran, the preface of which states:

Mass media – radio and television – should be used for perfecting the Islamic revolution and in serving to propagate Islamic culture ... and strictly refrain from propagating and spreading harmful and anti-revolutionary notions.³¹³

“The Islamization of information” means giving precedence to *da’wa*, according to Glass, while *khbar*, which usually translates as “tidings” or “news” (pl. *akhbar*, the name of many Arab newspapers), serves “as the basis of knowledge.”³¹⁴ Truth and objectivity, as defined in the Islamic context, occupy pride of place in this communication paradigm, since Islamic information means “clearly expressing the truth (*haqq*) in a way that attracts people” and “objectivity” is defined as “wisdom” (*hikma*), known as the “divine principle.” In addition, the *Qur’an* decrees that ‘ilm (knowledge) is the precise opposite of *zann* (guess-work, speculation, approximation).³¹⁵ “Conjecture [*zann*] avails nothing against truth [*haqq*]” (53: 28). Sayeed al Seini, who has written about the duties of Islamic journalists, says the ideas of Western objectivity and multiple sources are not enough:

Almost any person or event in the news today is subject to numerous contradictory stories. Which should we believe, especially in light of the highly advanced techniques of deception used today? The situation becomes worse if deception is an organized political tool.³¹⁶

He says journalists should look to the example of the reporters of the *hadith*, who use multiple sources to ensure the credibility of information. In addition, Seini adds, "Islam offers a whole panoply of guidelines to restrain the publication of whatever can unjustly harm the innocent or falsify reality."³¹⁷ Pasha offers one of the more complete expositions of the notion of modern news in the context of Muslim cultural theory, in which the sources of news are divided into the Divine and the Other. The criteria for judging news of Divine origin, such as the revelations to Moses, Muhammad and other recognized prophets, include the truth (*haqq*) of the news itself, and the veracity of the *Rasool* (messenger) or *Nabiy* (news giver). Much the same is true when it comes to news of earthly origin. Pasha sets out five criteria for news within the context of Muslim cultural theory:

1. It must be based on truth unmixed with willful falsehood: "And cover not Truth [*haqq*] with falsehood [*baatil*], nor conceal the Truth when you know (what it is)." (2: 42).
2. It must be conveyed by journalists of utmost character, competence and integrity and it is up to the public to ensure the story's veracity: "O you who believe, if a [*Faasiq*; person of questionable character] comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth..." (49: 6). (This verse is one scholar Sayeed al-Seini says is of central relevance to Islamic concept of news. Pasha quotes a translation of the Surah that uses the term "verify.")³¹⁸
3. Because "news has consequences," reporters must approach stories with "a strong sense of responsibility and accountability": "...lest you harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance." (49: 6).
4. "[M]ass media must not make mere suspicion the basis of their reporting." Journalists must avoid "gossip, rumor-mongering, muckraking, innuendo, backbiting and character assassination" and the news "must provide *nafa* (benefit) to the people."

In some ways, Pasha's precepts address many of the same "sources of error" about which Tunisian philosopher and historian Ibn Khaldun (1332-1406) warned scribes six centuries before. These include "partisanship" and "bias;" "over-confidence in one's

sources;" "failure to understand" the real meaning of the subject about which they were writing; "a mistaken belief in the truth" of what they were being told; the "inability rightly to place an event in its real context;" the "very common desire to gain the favour of those of high rank;" "ignorance of the laws" of nature, which could cause them to believe the improbable; and "exaggeration." On the latter, Ibn Khaldun advises writers to "check up" statements and claims and "weigh them up in a fair and critical spirit of inquiry."³¹⁹

Other principles more modern reporters must keep in mind, according to Pasha, include the fact that "there are limits ordained by Allah" which must not be crossed (2: 229); *obscenity must be avoided*; *ma'roof* (good community standards) must be maintained and *munkar* (that which violates community standards) opposed; journalists should reject partisanship and "recognize the limits of adversariality," thus balancing "the people's communication rights and freedoms with their communication duties, constraints and responsibilities;" and, finally, journalists must serve as "champions of justice and God's witness" [an alternate translation of (4: 135)] and recognize their "sweeping global system service and social responsibility role involving not only the entire human race, but also the other species and the worlds beyond."³²⁰

In short, according to Pasha, Muslim cultural theory provides a complete handbook for "what the mass media should cover, when and how, and what, if anything, they should not cover and for how long."³²¹ Of course, he notes, in the modern Muslim world of monarchs, dictators and Western hegemony, there exists "a fault line ... between Muslim cultural theory and Muslim reality with regard to political ideology and mass media."³²²

Hamid Mowlana identifies another fault line at work in the Islamic world today. This one pits two competing "cultural ecologies;" media globalization and the belief systems of the Muslim *umma*. He refers to them as the Information Society Paradigm and the Islamic Community Paradigm. The former, first propounded by Japanese scholar Yoneji Masuda in the 1970s, envisioned a Utopian "high mass knowledge creation society" built on a futuristic, highly-secular nation-state model.³²³ While Masuda's futuristic vision has since been watered down, his catch-phrase has been borrowed to characterize the Western-dominated globalization of media systems. Its polar opposite is the Islamic Community

Paradigm, which Mowlana, a professor at American University in Washington, D.C., describes as “a paradigm of revelation and not a paradigm of information.”³²⁴

It is Islam and the theory of *tawhid* (the unity of God, human beings and the universe) that determines the parameters of information, and not the other way around ... therefore, information and knowledge are not value-free but have normative, ethical and moral imperatives.³²⁵

Through the current dominance of Western media, he sees Western ideas bombarding Arabs and Muslims, undermining Islamic values and threatening to fragment the *umma*. “Information and knowledge are not the exclusive property of industrialized societies,” he argues. “Indeed, the Islamic Community Paradigm was responsible for the information and scientific revolution that characterized the Middle Ages” when the West was locked in the Dark Ages.³²⁶ The codification of systematic investigation and scientific methods, inductive reasoning, and the production of hundreds of great literary works contributed to “an Islamic *Weltanschauung*, a communication and information worldview” that has significant “socio-cultural and psycho-normative dimensions” and shapes Islamic society.³²⁷ In this worldview, “secularism becomes alien to Islamic social and political thought when it attempts to separate religion from politics, ideas from matter and rationality from cosmic vision.”³²⁸

One manifestation of that can be seen in the elements of the Palestinian media aligned with Hamas, the Islamist party that rose to power in the 2006 elections. A study of the main Hamas-backed newspaper, *Al-Risalah*, found that while it largely avoided overt religious preaching, news events were covered through the distinct prism of an Islamic worldview driven by Islamist politics:

This editorial policy reflects the view that Islam is not only a religion, but a social, economic, political, and cultural theory as well, and that no clear separation can be made between religion and other spheres of life just as there is no division between public and private.³²⁹

This approach is in sharp contrast to the Western, secular approach to journalism, as will be discussed below. Many Arab and Muslim journalists would also likely object to such

an overt linkage of news and religious politics – in fact, attacks on pro-Fatah Palestinian journalists in the aftermath of Hamas’ 2007 takeover of Gaza were, in part, related to that distinction – but the degree to which variations on this theme form a backdrop to coverage of events in the Middle East and broader Muslim world cannot be discounted.

“I believe that we and the Westerners cannot understand each other,” Hojatolislam Val Muslemin Muhammad Ali Taskhiri, advisor to Iranian leader Ayatollah Khamenei, has said, “and the reason behind this is that our structure and grounds as well as our settings and objectives are entirely different from those of the West. So the Islamic world is founded on conceptual grounds which cannot be believed or followed in the West and vice versa.”³³⁰

Not all – or perhaps even most – Muslims would take such an absolutist view. But it is one that reflects the critical role that culture, ideology, ethnicity and religious beliefs play in shaping worldviews. Mowlana says this reality “makes communication and information concepts subservient to the broader notion of culture and social ecology.”³³¹ Strip away the academic language and many of those same sentiments can be heard around the proverbial water coolers in newsrooms across the Muslim world.

CHAPTER IV: BENCHMARKING ANGLO-AMERICAN JOURNALISTIC VALUES

Good journalists should be watchdogs of government and those in authority.

MARGARET GILMORE
BBC HOME AFFAIRS CORRESPONDENT³³²

1) THE SEARCH FOR OBJECTIVITY

In recent years, officials in the Bush administration have repeatedly contrasted the “bias” of Arab journalists³³³ with that of the “balance” in the US media.³³⁴ It is for this reason that a lengthy review of the literature on American journalistic norms is relevant to a study examining the self-perceptions of Arab journalists and their views of the role of Arab media. From a Western point of view, the primary benchmark for journalistic professionalism is the notion of objectivity, which is considered by some journalists in Europe and the US to be “sacred,” though in a far more secular sense than in the Islamic view. Media historian Michael Schudson defines objectivity as “the view that one can and should separate facts from values.”³³⁵ It is the polar opposite of the Islamic view that “information and knowledge are not value-free, but have normative, ethical and moral imperatives.”³³⁶

One of the early elucidations of the mission and values of the modern US news industry came in the “Canons of Journalism,” a code of ethics adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) at their 1923 convention. The code listed “Sincerity, Truthfulness, Accuracy” as core journalistic principles. Under the principle of “Impartiality,” the Canon declared, “News reports should be free of opinion or bias of any kind.”³³⁷ That approach exemplifies what Hallin and Giles identify as the “liberal” model of journalism, characterized by a commercial media, rather than one owned by political or governmental interests; limited state intervention; and a strong sense of professionalism, centered around the “‘the objectivity norm’ – the idea that journalists should be politically neutral and separated from attachments to political parties and organized social groups.”³³⁸

The belief in the ideals of objectivity – or, if not pure objectivity, then, at least, fairness and balance – lies at the heart of the self-view of US journalists, as well as that of

many of their Western European counterparts. As veteran newspaper editors Bill Kovach and Tom Rosentheil wrote in their classic text, *The Elements of Journalism*, "Journalism's first obligation is to the truth."³³⁹ "[E]xcellent journalists ... have core journalistic values running through them like a stick of rock: they report with impeccable accuracy [and] they know instinctively there are two sides to every story," says Roger Mosey, head of BBC TV News.³⁴⁰ Jack Fuller, former publisher of the *Chicago Tribune*, calls this commitment to objectivity "the truth discipline," which "requires news reports to withhold ultimate judgment on matters of value."³⁴¹ That normative aspiration is often far removed from the empirical reality, as a host of studies of US coverage of the post-9/11 era have chronicled.³⁴²

Mainstream American media literally and figuratively waved the flag following the attacks of 9/11 and the invasion of Iraq,³⁴³ as did elements of the British media.³⁴⁴ Western journalists – particularly those in the US and Britain – were also seen by many critics, this writer among them, to have framed their coverage of the 2006 Lebanon war in such a way that Hezbollah was cast as the aggressor.³⁴⁵ This willingness of reporters to allow themselves to become weapons of war³⁴⁶ demonstrates that when covering routine news, journalists may approximate some semblance of balance, but, as a study of terrorism coverage found, when "society's core values are under threat – such as with physical or political violence or terrorist attacks – journalists switch to a cultural narrative that moves the public mind back toward the dominant cultural order."³⁴⁷

The search for objectivity can be traced back to Max Weber (1864-1920), who argued in *Science as a Vocation* that values are arbitrary and science cannot choose between them. Sociologists took up the cry with the rise of "value-free" social science, the goal of which was research independent of the researcher's values.³⁴⁸ The concept of objectivity has its roots in Kant (1724-1804) who emphasized the distinction between "pure reason" and "practical reason," and separated the realm of nature from the realm of morals. In Kant's new world, "the distinction between facts and values, between what is – the natural, and what ought to be – and the moral, became fundamental."³⁴⁹

In journalistic terms, the idea was that the reporter must "stand outside oneself and so separate [the reporting] from one's own subjective preferences about what the world should be."³⁵⁰ Walter Lippman (1889-1974), an outspoken proponent of journalistic

objectivity, said it was essential for the reporter to “remain clear and free of his irrational, his unexamined, his or her unacknowledged prejudgments.”³⁵¹ Yet, from the beginning, inherent in the concept of objectivity was a strong element of the subjective:

[Objectivity] is not just a claim about what kind of knowledge is reliable. It is also a moral philosophy, a declaration of what kind of thinking one should engage in, in making moral decisions. It is, moreover, a political commitment, for the ideal of objectivity provides a guide to what groups one should acknowledge as relevant audiences for judging one’s own thoughts and acts.³⁵²

This “declaration” of “*what kind of thinking*” one should engage in itself brings to bear the particular values of the declarer, and the decision on what is “relevant” can only be a subjective judgment. “Objectivity,” says Fuller of the *Chicago Tribune*, “assumes an independence between the observer and the phenomenon observed that simply does not exist.”³⁵³ Then there is the more existential question: “The ‘objective assumption’ states not that the media are objective, but that there is a world out there to be objective about.”³⁵⁴ Indeed, objectivity is dependent on the shared worldview of those doing the perceiving. After all, “information and knowledge are not value-free but transmit, on purpose or not, ethical and moral imperatives.”³⁵⁵ In other words, send an Israeli journalist and a Palestinian journalist out to cover the same story on the West Bank, and the result is likely to be very different, even if both set out to be meticulously balanced.

The potential for distortion is also embedded in the sense of *noblesse oblige* with which some journalists approach their job, best summed up in the infamous comment by David Brinkley (1920-2003), then the anchor of *The NBC Nightly News*: “News is what I say it is. It’s something worth knowing by *my* standards.”³⁵⁶

2) DEFINING OBJECTIVITY

The quest to achieve objectivity – or Truth with a capital “T” – is a relatively new development in American and European journalism. As late as the 1920s, “‘objectivity’ was not a term American journalists or critics of US journalism used³⁵⁷ and complaints about the lack of balance extend back as far as the industry itself. In the 1830s, author James Fenimore

Cooper (1789-1851) engaged in a series of lawsuits against newspapers, which he considered “corrupt” and “vulgar”:

If newspapers are useful in overthrowing tyrants, it is only to establish tyranny of their own. ... With loud professions of freedom of opinion, there is no tolerance; with a parade of patriotism, no sacrifice of interests; and with fulsome panegyrics on propriety, no decency.³⁵⁸

From the flag-waving Fleet Street journalists who filed paeans to British troops in the Crimea to the famous British correspondent Macdonald Hastings (1909-1982), who said during World War Two, “Objectivity can come back into fashion when the shooting is over,”³⁵⁹ a commitment to truth was not historically the strong suit of journalists on either side of the Atlantic.

Even though he once declared that he would prefer newspapers without government to government without newspapers, US President Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826) was also under no illusions about the credibility of newspapers of his day. “Truth itself becomes suspicious by being put into the polluted vehicle,” he once wrote to an acquaintance.³⁶⁰ The so-called “penny press” of 1830s America was largely bought and paid for by politicians and political parties, which not only provided investment capital, but also supported the papers through political advertisements. “Journalists,” wrote the biographer of New York editor James Gordon Bennett (1795-1872), “were usually little more than secretaries dependent upon cliques of politicians, merchants, brokers, and office-seekers for their position and bread.”³⁶¹ That remained essentially true until Horace Greeley (1811-1872) laid the groundwork for modern American journalism by founding the *New York Tribune* in 1841. But “objectivity” was still far removed from his mind. His goal, said Greeley, was “a journal removed alike from servile partisanship on the one hand and from gagged, mincing neutrality on the other.”³⁶²

In his history of journalistic objectivity, Schudson chronicles the sudden and dramatic shift from opinion – and exaggeration – to strenuous adherence to what he quotes Julius Chambers (1850-1920), managing editor of the *New York Herald*, describing as, “Facts, facts; nothing but facts” and what H.L. Mencken complained was his paper’s “craze for

mathematical accuracy.”³⁶³ Lincoln Steffens (1866-1936), a reporter for the *Evening Post*, recalled that under the new regime, “Reporters were to report news as it happened, like machines, without prejudice, color, and without style; all alike. Humor or any sign of personality in our reports was caught, rebuked, and, in time, suppressed. As a writer, I was permanently hurt by my years on the *Post*.”³⁶⁴ But eventually, most American reporters “saluted an ethic in which non-belief was their pride.”³⁶⁵

Yet from the first time the mantra of journalistic objectivity was intoned, the contradictions inherent in the self-view of Western – and particularly American – journalism have been apparent. *The New York Times* has long been held up as the gold standard of US journalism. When Adolph Ochs (1858-1935), then publisher of the *Chattanooga Times*, bought the faltering New York paper in 1896, he set out to revolutionize the industry, laying out the *Times*’ philosophy in a lengthy editorial. The paper’s mission, he wrote, was to

...give the news, all the news, in concise and attractive form ... to give the new impartially, without fear or favor, regardless of any party, sect, or interest involved ... nor will there be a departure from the general tone and character and policies ... that have distinguished The New York Times as a nonpartisan paper – unless it be, if possible, to intensify its devotion to the cause of sound money and tariff reform, opposition to wastefulness and speculation in administering the public affairs and in its advocacy of the lowest tax consistent with good government, maintain individual vested rights and assure the free exercise of a sound conscience.³⁶⁶

Thus, from the very beginning, protestations of impartiality notwithstanding, *The Times* emphatically had a mission, a “devotion” to a “cause,” which meant it approached certain stories with a particular agenda. Yet, at the end of World War II, which saw the US and British media serve as an extension of the military’s propaganda arm, “objectivity came back into fashion” ³⁶⁷ and was soon “universally acknowledged to be the spine of the journalist’s moral code.”³⁶⁸

Today, it is generally recognized that there is no such thing as true objectivity.³⁶⁹ “Journalists inhabit a culture of ideas which shape the way they report, select, edit and

prioritise news,” wrote Australian journalist and academic Alan Knight. “These ideas reproduce and reinforce themselves in the news making process, re-creating apparently flexible ways for imagining the world outside the newsroom.”³⁷⁰

But with that recognition, come new concerns. “The nineteenth-century worry was exclusively about *intentional* shadings of the truth for partisan ends. The concern was about the danger of partisan views. The twentieth century added the danger of *partial* views, the inevitable selectivity of facts, the inevitable exercise of judgment in interpreting the real world. The nineteenth century worried about journalists’ *intentions* and what they wanted to do. In the twentieth century, there is an additional concern about journalists’ *attentions* and what they are able to see and do,” according to Schudson.³⁷¹

Critics charge that the conventions of Western journalism are “used to contrive the illusion of objectivity,”³⁷² in a “strategic ritual”³⁷³ designed to refute charges of bias or distortion,³⁷⁴ thus allowing “journalists to maintain their pretence of dealing in facts and not values.”³⁷⁵ Former *New York Times* reporter John Hess called the quest for objectivity a “straightjacket” that produces “bloodless journalism ... no opinions, just the news, extruded in strings like sausage that could be cut to fit.”³⁷⁶ Thus, the critics say, are masked a host of underlying sins while audiences are provide with a distorted view of the world. There are many who argue that the best one can hope for is “functional truth,”³⁷⁷ in which the journalist tries to put aside any conscious biases but acknowledges that he or she is reporting through a personal, cultural, nationalistic or corporate frame. “This is what journalism is after – a practical, functional form of truth,” according to Kovach and Rosenstiel. “It is not truth in the absolute or philosophical sense. It is not the truth of a chemical equation. But journalism can – and must – pursue truth in a sense by which we can operate day by day.”³⁷⁸

However, an array of voices claim that even relative truth remains outside the grasp of the mainstream Western media at the dawn of the twenty-first century. “The content of the news media inevitably reflects the interests of those who pay the bills,” says former *New York Times* editor Herb Altschull,³⁷⁹ while sociologist Herbert Gans is among those who believe that elite journalists of the national news organizations “help legitimate and even glorify the sources and strata from which they report.”³⁸⁰ That is not a new viewpoint. “[T]he

Constitution does not guarantee objectivity of the press, nor is objectivity obtainable in a subjective world; and ... the question ... really raised is not whether the news shall be unprejudiced but rather whose prejudices shall color the news," wrote Morris Ernst in a 'friend of the court' brief in the 1937 Supreme Court case *Associated Press vs. National Labor Relations Board*.³⁸¹

In a scathing indictment of international coverage in the American media, Tom Fenton, former chief foreign correspondent for CBS News, charged that even if they are able to compartmentalize their own biases, reporters are subject to the institutional bias of their news organizations. "The news gets pre-selected to fit the political message. The home office rules over its correspondents, requiring them to acknowledge only the news that fits their vision of the world," Fenton wrote.³⁸² The British media has come in for much the same criticism. Even the vaunted BBC has not escaped, finding itself at the heart of a major controversy over reporting about British government policy toward Iraq, which eventually cost several of its top executives their jobs.³⁸³

3) THE CHANGE AGENT MODEL

There have been a number of movements in the US and Western Europe advocating that reporters shed their false "vanity of neutrality"³⁸⁴ and become change agents, seeking to drive policy and politics. The "muckrakers" of the Gilded Age who attacked the privileged class "made no apologies for advocating change;"³⁸⁵ the American journalist-participants of the Spanish Civil War, who believed in using their craft to stop the evils of fascism;³⁸⁶ the "New Journalism" of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century Europe;³⁸⁷ and practitioners of American Tom Wolfe's brand of "New Journalism" in the 1960s, which blended fact and fiction in a search for a greater truth;³⁸⁸ represented some of the best known attempts to break out of the "straightjacket" of strict objectivity.

Even the patron-saint of American television journalists, Edward R. Murrow (1908-1965) of CBS News, famously deviated from the ideal of neutrality when he took on the anti-Communist crusader Sen. Joseph McCarthy (1908-1957) in the late 1950s. "The actions of the junior senator from Wisconsin have caused alarm and dismay amongst our allies abroad and given considerable comfort to our enemies," Murrow opined on his now legendary *See It Now* broadcast. "The fault, dear Brutus, lies not in our stars but in ourselves."³⁸⁹ In an

equally famous departure from that same network's strict commitment to objectivity, Murrow's spiritual heir, CBS News anchor Walter Cronkite, strayed into the realm of advocacy when, after a visit to Vietnam in the wake of the 1968 Tet offensive, he declared that negotiation was the only "rational way out" of the morass.³⁹⁰

In the latter part of the twentieth century, another wave of journalists also rebelled at the strictures of objectivity, arguing that they imposed a forced moral calculus when reporting war, under which each side must receive equal time and equal weight no matter the relative level of responsibility for the violence. Appalled by the slaughter of Bosnian Muslims at the hands of the Serbs, and of America's delayed intervention on their behalf, CNN correspondent Christine Amanpour and former BBC correspondent Martin Bell were among the leading voices calling for what Bell labeled a "journalism of attachment ... which cares as well as knows," driving international policy, rather than simply report its effects.³⁹¹ They aspired to emulate the noted Polish foreign correspondent Ryszard Kapuscinski, whose reporting was characterized by empathy for those he covered and who believed "truth still could remain hidden under an avalanche of facts."³⁹²

Meanwhile, in the US, the public journalism movement (also known as civic journalism), and the lesser-known communitarians,³⁹³ sought to counter the "determined detachment" of the media that some critics claimed was destroying American democracy.³⁹⁴ Proponents of public journalism, such as *Atlantic Magazine* editor James Fallows, argued that "many journalists are so wedded to the ideal of detachment that they fail to feel any loyalty toward their country, their community, their culture and religious institutions, and their fellow citizens. This idea of detachment leads these journalists to even abandon their own natural impulses as so much unnecessary human baggage getting in the way of capturing a good story."³⁹⁵ A frequently-cited example was that of an interview on the topic of journalistic ethics with Mike Wallace of CBS News and Peter Jennings (1938-2005) of ABC News, in which the two were asked what they would do if they were with a group of enemy troops who had laid an ambush for US forces. Would they warn the Americans or film the action? Wallace said it was his job as a reporter to cover the event, not intervene; Jennings initially replied it was his duty as an American to warn them, then quickly backtracked and agreed with Wallace.³⁹⁶

Proponents of public journalism say such attitudes reflect detachment, elitism, negativity and conflict orientation, which they denigrate as “the Four Horsemen of the journalistic apocalypse.”³⁹⁷ Conversely, on the international stage, meanwhile, they criticize what Edward Fouhy, a former news executive with all three major US networks, called the “bi-polar journalism” that has divided the world into “us” and “them.”³⁹⁸ “There is a sense in which an adversarial posture becomes an ideology that prevents the sensitive interpretation and application of the principles of humaneness, truth telling, justice, freedom/independence, and the stewardship of free expression,” explains to Edward Lambeth of the University of Missouri School of Journalism.³⁹⁹

Public journalists insist that “telling the news is not enough” and believe journalists should become “change agents” and “civil catalysts”⁴⁰⁰ who “remember that they are citizens as well as journalists”⁴⁰¹ and “transform their journalism into a mechanism for finding solutions to public problems.”⁴⁰² Strict objectivity, wrote Johns Hopkins University professor and former *New York Times* reporter Herb Altschull, serves the interest of the powers-that-be, “for it safeguards the system against the explosive pressures for change. So long as ‘both sides’ are presented, neither side is glorified above the other, and the status quo remains unchallenged.”⁴⁰³ Paralleling the public journalism movement are the communitarians, who call for “a journalism of outrage” and insist that “reporting must be an instrument of social justice.”⁴⁰⁴ “Only a humane and just journalism has the capacity to affirm the newsworthiness of the oppressed,” argued Leigh University professor Jack Lule in a study of US coverage of the killings of Brazilian street children.⁴⁰⁵ The tiny “Peace Journalism” movement, meanwhile, argues that conflict must be framed in terms of potential solutions rather than dwelling on body-counts.⁴⁰⁶

The idea of such social responsibility is not entirely alien to Western journalism. It was a central theme in the Hutchins Commission report, which has been called “the most important statement on the media in the twentieth century.”⁴⁰⁷ The US panel, officially called the Commission on the Freedom of the Press, was convened in 1947 by the president of the University of Chicago, Robert M. Hutchins (1899-1977), at the urging of *Time* founder Henry Luce (1898-1967) to examine the relationship between the media and government. The report, entitled *A Free and Responsible Press*, devoted considerable attention to concerns that

American minority groups were not receiving adequate coverage in the media of the day. Among other things, it recommended that the press should (1) provide a "truthful and comprehensive account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning;" (2) present and clarify "social goals and values of society;" (3) offer a "representative picture of the constituent groups of society;" and (3) serve as "a forum for the exchange of commitment and criticism."⁴⁰⁸ Cronkite of CBS News once said that American reporters tend to "side with humanity rather than authority,"⁴⁰⁹ meaning they back the underdog, a perspective supported by a study that found a "majority of the journalists surveyed believe their work should be a force for social reform."⁴¹⁰ Put more simply, in the vernacular of the newsroom, the job of a journalist is to "comfort the afflicted and afflict the comfortable."⁴¹¹

But many scholars argue that even if those ideals ever really took hold in the US media, they quickly became lost in the battle for audiences and ratings.⁴¹² Writing in a tone bordering on despair in the mid-1980s, Lambeth of the University of Missouri School of Journalism surveyed a global landscape in which "news ... often brings pain, disappointment, and a frustrated feeling of individual impotence."⁴¹³ He quoted a colleague, who he said, succinctly captured the spirit of the times:

Regularly, punctually, monotonously, our newspapers and radio and television stations relay listings of hazards, disasters, misdoings and undoings. Helplessly drawn to any dramatic situation, unanalytical accomplices in the zone of thought, journalists ... propagate notions which they poorly understand and discard those they assume others may misunderstand or refuse to tolerate. Preoccupied with the performance of individuals occupying official positions, journalists ignore the background. ... They point us toward no detours but diligently cover our collisions.⁴¹⁴

In response, Lambeth laid out a framework of principles for journalism ethics that went beyond the "social responsibility" model of the Hutchins Commission. These included (1) the "principle of truth telling," which involves "a habit of accuracy, of checking and rechecking to establish the accuracy of questionable information;"⁴¹⁵ (2) the "principle of justice," which involves a newsroom "climate conducive to high ethical standards" and a commitment to the "watchdog" responsibilities of the media to, in the words of the ASNE

code of ethics, “bring independent scrutiny to bear on the forces of power in society;”⁴¹⁶ (3) the “principle of freedom” that involves both tenaciously safeguarding freedom of the press and avoiding “tangible threats” to journalistic independence and moral authority, whether “newsroom policies inimical to wider public needs” or being “co-opted” by news sources;⁴¹⁷ (4) the “problem of humaneness,” by which Lambeth meant the moral balancing act between the duty to report and the duty to help fellow human beings, whether it involves individuals – such as the decision not to shed the journalistic observer status and help victims of a car crash – or nations, such as debate over whether journalists should inform authorities if they learn the location of a terrorist suspect;⁴¹⁸ (5) and the “principle of stewardship,” by which Lambeth meant journalists must take seriously their unique role in society to “monitor the condition of justice within or between institutions” and “help keep the wells of public discourse unpoisoned.”⁴¹⁹

In many ways, journalism in the US and Britain has come full circle. The dominance of “objective” reporting was challenged in the 1930s and 1940s with the rise of “interpretive reporting,” which argued that facts alone cannot provide a fair and comprehensive understanding for the audience. “Show me a man who thinks he is objective and I’ll show you a man who’s deceiving himself,” said *Time* publisher Henry Luce, whose magazine married news with a heavy dose of interpretation and opinion.⁴²⁰ The proponents of public journalism and their allies are doing the same today, harking back to the days when a nineteenth century reporter approached the news not as an impartial observer, but “as a participant who spits on his hands, rolls up his sleeves, and jumps into the fight.”⁴²¹

That push and pull between impartiality and engagement is constantly at play in Western newsrooms. Indeed, partisan flag-waving in time of conflict has been the norm, from the American Revolution, during which the press played a major role in stoking the fires of rebellion, and the aforementioned Crimean war, to the present day.⁴²² Yet, public journalists and the like are the minority. In the prevailing ideology of British and American newsgathering, “A journalist is detached, and the story is the thing” and “[t]he truth, rather than an agenda” is the goal.⁴²³ As renowned White House correspondent Helen Thomas observed, “It is the job of reporters and editors to ask the tough questions of those in power and to act on the answers with trust, integrity, and honesty guiding their judgment.”⁴²⁴

Much the same is seen in the self-view of the BBC where, as BBC World Affairs Editor John Simpson put it, "First and foremost, there is a powerful tradition of objectivity and lack of bias in British broadcasting."⁴²⁵

A certain sense of moral superiority is embedded in such an attitude. In his newspaper creed, E.W. Scripps, founder of the Scripps Howard media dynasty, wrote that the Bill of Rights was "a grant of freedom to the people; and we feel as journalists we are the trustees of this freedom."⁴²⁶ "A newspaper is like a church," *Washington Post* columnist David Ignatius wrote in a novel about journalists. "It is built by ordinary sinners, people who in their individual lives are often petty and corrupt, but who collectively create an institution that transcends themselves."⁴²⁷ A study of US journalism textbooks found them pervaded by a "belief in the morality and righteousness of journalism." So uniform was the message, journalism educator Bonnie S. Brennan reported, that the result was a prevailing "ideology that elevated the role of journalist to an almost sacred commitment and continued to reify a belief in the watchdog function of the press."⁴²⁸ However, the "sacred" has often proven to be profane. In a historical study of investigative journalism, Mark Feldstein found that this "muckraking" model "has proved to be cyclical," waxing and waning with the political winds.⁴²⁹

4) THE MISSION OF JOURNALISM

The prevailing view of the mission of journalism as articulated by many British and American reporters was summed up by Kovach and Rosentheil: "The primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing."⁴³⁰ This definition is in line with the broader self-view of American and British journalists that they are serving the public good. In his study of broadcast interview techniques, Stephen Clayman found that American reporters use this notion that journalism serves as a "tribune of the people ... not only as a normative ideal that journalists strive for, but also as a strategic legitimating resource."⁴³¹ Yet increasingly, Western reporters are questioning whether the goal of serving society can be achieved by continuing to stand aloof from the world they cover. Writing in 1971, Johnstone found what he called two "pure" and competing ideologies of journalism: a 'neutral' "nothing-but-the-truth" approach, in which journalists were messengers of information, and the 'participant' "whole-truth" orientation,

in which they played a more active role in covering the news. Most journalists, he reported, subscribed to elements of both.⁴³² A study of American journalists in the mid-1990s found them to be “less clinically detached than they were once expected to be.”⁴³³ As the BBC’s Simpson put it, journalists are not required to be “moral eunuchs, blandly laying out different views as though they have equal value.”⁴³⁴

Building on the studies cited above and others,⁴³⁵ researchers David Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, both of Indiana University, surveyed 1,600 US journalists in 1982. They found that the reporters harbored “seemingly contradictory conceptions of their role (i.e. they were both ‘objective’ informers and ‘subjective’ interpreters).”⁴³⁶ When they replicated their study a decade later, “a third of all journalists fully embraced both the interpretive and the disseminator roles.”⁴³⁷ Still, few were likely to subscribe to Henry Luce’s defense of *Time* magazine’s partisan coverage of the 1952 US presidential election that “it was *Time*’s duty to explain why the country needs Ike. Any other form of journalism would have been unfair and uninvolved.”⁴³⁸

Journalists tend to nurture a certain romantic view of themselves as men (or women) of the people. In his classic book on the 1972 US presidential election campaign, author Timothy Crouse offers a glimpse of this fantasy self-portrait by quoting Dan Rather, then a well-coiffed White House correspondent who would go on to earn tens of millions of dollars as anchor of *The CBS Evening News*: “The average journalist, myself included, is a whiskey-breathed, nicotine-stained, stubble-bearded guy...” Crouse wryly notes that, “Rather was wearing a beautifully-tailored blue suit and he gave off the healthy glow of a man who has just emerged from a hotel barber shop. I had never seen him smoke and I doubt whether, on a typical day, his strongest exhalation could budget the needle on a breathalyzer.”⁴³⁹

In contrast, critics have painted a portrait of US journalists as “a generation of vipers”⁴⁴⁰ – cynical elitists, disconnected from the majority of Americans in terms of politics, lifestyle and religion. The scholarship may not use such loaded rhetoric, but much of it does bear out the hypothesis that American journalists do not, for the most part, represent the people for whom, and to whom, they report. Beginning with Leo Rosten’s benchmark survey of the Washington press corps in 1937,⁴⁴¹ a series of studies⁴⁴² have documented “a wide disparity between the attitudes of journalists and the general public, with the former

consistently to the left of the latter.”⁴⁴³ A 1985 *Los Angeles Times* survey of 3,000 reporters across the country, which asked the same questions on a range of political, social and economic issues as appeared on a national survey of the public, reported that, on average, there existed a 25 percent gap between journalists and other Americans.⁴⁴⁴ Both in terms of how they perceive themselves on a liberal-to-conservative scale, and how they voted in past presidential elections, the majority of surveys in the latter half of the twentieth century found reporters to be overwhelmingly liberal and/or supportive of the Democratic Party. Weaver and Wilhoit documented something similar in several surveys. By 2003, they found that while journalists had become slightly more conservative, they were still less likely to consider themselves politically on the right (25%) than was the general public (41%) and more likely to identify with the left (40%) than the public at large (17%).⁴⁴⁵ The public perceived the same. A 2007 survey found that 83 percent of American voters believed the media was biased in one direction or another.⁴⁴⁶

In a widely debated study of American journalism, Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman and Linda Lichter painted a portrait of an industry disconnected from the public to whom it reported: predominantly white and male, highly educated, well-paid, largely drawn from upper-middle class families in urban centers “at a distance from the social and cultural traditions of small-town middle America.”⁴⁴⁷ Most controversially, the team employed a tool of psychology, the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), in an attempt to “probe the collective psyche of the media elite”⁴⁴⁸ and measure the underlying values and “unavoidable preconceptions” that shape how journalists approach the news.⁴⁴⁹ Administered during hour-long interviews in 1980 with 238 journalists at America’s more influential media outlets, the test involved exposing the reporters to a series of unlabeled photographs and asking them to speculate on what the images contained. The theory of the test was that “the subject reveals some of his innermost fantasies without being aware that he is doing so.”⁴⁵⁰

“The social world journalists created from the TAT pictures, peopled by brutal soldiers, corrupt businessmen, and struggling underdogs, tells us something about how they view the world around them,” the researchers reported.⁴⁵¹ The personality traits thus said to have been revealed, the team concluded, emphasized an ambivalent relationship with power, narcissism, low need for attachment and concern for personal intimacy. “These traits

seem highly relevant to several aspects” of modern journalism, they observed, including “emphasis on power, competition (including the electoral ‘horse race’), and the adversarial style increasingly adopted by journalists, to the negativism and resistance to criticism that many attribute to the profession.”⁴⁵² In a blistering criticism of the study, media scholar Herb Gans accused the team of skewing their data to fit a conservative political agenda. “They report data in ways that turn journalists into opinionated proponents of ideas implied to be unpatriotic,” Gans wrote in a lengthy rebuttal published in the *Columbia Journalism Review*.⁴⁵³

The debate over liberal vs. conservative tendencies in the media continues to this day. “The kind of external pluralism that characterizes the press in other systems, where news organizations reflect ideological tendencies, has mostly disappeared from the US press,” Hallin and Giles wrote in 2005.⁴⁵⁴ Dueling books by former CBS News correspondent Bernard Goldberg⁴⁵⁵ and Eric Alterman, media columnist for *The Nation* and a fellow at the New School University,⁴⁵⁶ made competing claims about conservative and liberal biases in the news industry. Meanwhile, the rise of openly conservative news organizations, such as Fox News, *The Weekly Standard* and *The Washington Times*, a “Foxification” of some other cable channels with what some critics call “ideologues in seats that were once filled by real news reporters,”⁴⁵⁷ and the appearance of avowedly liberal outlets such as Air America radio network and *Democracy Now*, signaled “a return of a partisan voice”⁴⁵⁸ and appeared to undermine Hallin and Giles view that the US media was becoming less, rather than more, polarized. While the majority of American journalists still ranked fairness among their most important values, almost half expressed the concern that journalists too often let their own ideological views bleed into their coverage.⁴⁵⁹ A 2007 survey found that fully 83 percent of the US public said the media was biased one way or the other.⁴⁶⁰

5) RELIGION AND THE US MEDIA

The majority of surveys of US journalists in the twentieth century have found that they exhibit a highly secular orientation. “Exactly half eschew any religious affiliation,” Lichter et al reported. Only eight percent said they went to church or synagogue weekly and 86 percent said they rarely or never attended religious services.⁴⁶¹ That manifest itself in complaints that, “Religious faith and, in particular, orthodox traditional faiths have been slighted by academic and journalistic elites.”⁴⁶² By late in the century, those numbers

appeared to be changing. A 1995 survey by Rothman and research partner Amy Black, which replicated the earlier Lichter et al study, found that the number of journalists denying a religious preference had dropped from 50 percent to 22 percent, and those reporting that they never attend religious services was down from 50 percent to 40 percent. Still, when compared to other elite groups, “members of the media and the television and movie elite [remained] the least likely to attend religious services.”⁴⁶³

The 2002 survey by Weaver et al found that journalists “were far less likely to practice any mainstream religion than the public at large.”⁴⁶⁴ One-third of the journalists surveyed reporting that they did not practice any religion and another 10 percent indicating identifying themselves with a religion other than Protestants, Evangelical Christians, Catholics or Jews, for a total of 44 percent declaring “other or none,” versus 20 percent in the 2000 US Census. “When it comes to the importance of religion or religious beliefs, US journalists were also not in step with the larger society,” according to Weaver et al.⁴⁶⁵ The percentage of journalists rating religion and religious values “very important” was almost half that of the general public (36% vs. 61%), although 36 percent of journalists rated religion as “somewhat important” versus 37 percent in the general population.⁴⁶⁶ Similar findings a decade earlier led Weaver and Wilhoit to question the conclusion in their own 1982 study that “US journalists were more reflective of the general society than removed from it.”⁴⁶⁷ Likewise, even though 85 percent of the reporters surveyed in 2002 said they were brought up in a religious denomination, only 35 percent said that religious upbringing was influential as a source of their journalistic ethics (“religious upbringing” came twelfth on a list topped by “newsroom learning” and “family upbringing”).⁴⁶⁸

Despite such findings, a case has been made that religion – or, at least, religious values – form an unspoken backdrop in the American newsroom. Several authors have argued that the investigative reporters of the “muckraker” era were strongly influenced by Judeo-Christian values,⁴⁶⁹ which others claim remain at the root of modern journalistic values.⁴⁷⁰ However, even sympathetic observers concur that “there is still a powerful uneasiness about religion”⁴⁷¹ within American newsrooms, which have been called “citadels of secularism.”⁴⁷² A 2001 study of journalists in the US and Canada found a “strong general religious orientation,” with almost three-quarters of those surveyed reporting that religion

was important or very important to them, but a deep sensitivity to overtly mixing those beliefs with their journalism or connecting journalistic values directly with Judeo-Christian teachings.⁴⁷³

Time and again, the respondents indicated a uniform predilection for applying religious values in their professional life as long as they were expressed in what could be termed journalistic, as opposed to, religious language.⁴⁷⁴

Critics have charged that, until recently, this secular orientation in the US media has produced a dearth of religion coverage, making it 'the greatest story never told.' At least one poll showed that Americans rank religious news second only in importance to education,⁴⁷⁵ yet the "role religion plays in America and the world has been a well-kept secret in most of the nation's newsrooms," according to syndicated religion writer Terry Mattingly.⁴⁷⁶ He argues that the problem is not that reporters are anti-religious; it's that they are irreligious. He calls it "a bias of worldview."⁴⁷⁷

6) IDEOLOGY OF JOURNALISM

Weaver and Wilhoit's landmark series of studies has become a benchmark for assessing journalist attitudes around the world. The team identified four core functions – or "belief systems" – within American journalism that they said remained constant in the decade between the first and second surveys: "Interpreters," who tended to work for larger, corporate-owned media; "Disseminators," were found in all branches of the media and were frequently political moderates-to-conservatives committed to formal journalistic training and audience research; "Adversarialists," who felt strongly about the traditional government "watchdog" function of the media; and the emerging category of "Populist Mobilizers," often "small-media, community-oriented idealists," whose influence was on the rise.⁴⁷⁸ Journalists ranked "getting information to the public quickly" (likely driven by 24-hour live cable television and the internet) and "investigating government claims" at the top of their list of priorities, followed by "avoiding stories with unverified content" and "providing analysis of complex problems." As in an earlier study by Hugh Culbertson of Ohio University, the pair found the traditional adversarial function well down on the list of priorities.⁴⁷⁹

Journalism's majority culture, then, framed its basic purpose in terms resonant with the old recommendations of the Hutchins Commission ... [M]ost journalists in 1992 appeared to have a 'belief system' that reflected the Commission's goal of investigating 'the truth about the fact[s]' and providing 'context which gives them meaning.'⁴⁸⁰

Thomas Hanitzsch of Ilmenau University of Technology in Germany defines professional ideology as "the more or less conscious views shared by either all members of a particular profession or a subpopulation of this profession."⁴⁸¹ Scholars have mixed views on the degree to which journalism is an ideology or even how strong the sense of "profession" is among them.⁴⁸² Journalists have been found to identify themselves more closely with their profession than with the companies – or even the medium – for which they work. ⁴⁸³ But in their 1992 study, Weaver and Wilhoit concluded that, "The institutional culture of journalism, never particularly strong, was weaker ... than a decade previous."⁴⁸⁴ Journalists remained "deeply divided on many questions of journalistic practice."

And what was true in America, with its long history of independent journalism, was echoed and amplified in newsrooms around the world where those questions were reflected through the prism of different cultures, traditions and political philosophies. ⁴⁸⁵

CHAPTER V: JOURNALISM AROUND THE WORLD

It is too much to ask [reporters] to make impartial, quality news if they are underpaid.

ULIN NI'AM YUSRON
INDEPENDENT JOURNALISTS ALLIANCE (INDONESIA)⁴⁸⁶

1) ANOTHER VIEW

A substantial body of literature provides evidence that not all journalists share the avowed mission and values of Anglo-American journalists. In the early 1990s, American political scientist Thomas Patterson and German communications scholar Wolfgang Donbach surveyed journalists in the US, Britain, Sweden, Germany and Italy and asked them to place political parties and news organizations in their own countries on a left-right scale. Europeans saw journalism covering the entire spectrum of political viewpoints, while the Americans saw news organizations occupying a narrow band between the Democratic and Republican parties.⁴⁸⁷

Beyond the “liberal” model of journalism that dominates the US, Hallin and Giles described two other dominant models: the “polarized pluralist” model of southern Europe, characterized by a high degree of political parallelism in which “journalistic professionalism ... is not as deeply rooted,” writers and editors are “political actors above all,” news organizations are frequently “controlled by actors outside of journalism,” and “a journalism of ideas” prevails in contrast to the “journalism of information.”⁴⁸⁸

In northern Europe, meanwhile, the researchers reported the dominance of what they called the “Democratic corporatist model,” in which a commitment to press freedom combines with a strong sense of social responsibility. The name comes from the label given to the political structure that rose in most of the smaller northern European countries in the early twentieth century. Under this model, political parallelism is combined with a high degree of journalistic professionalism. Journalists see themselves as representing civil society and believe “it is their responsibility to report the news from a point of view.”⁴⁸⁹

Hallin and Giles argue that the differences between the systems had been reduced in recent years under the influence of globalization and the growing influence of the American “liberal” model. They see “a considerable degree of homogenization of media systems” that is producing “a common culture of journalism.”⁴⁹⁰ In Europe, they point to the “secularization” of European societies and the “decline of peoples’ attachments to separate religious and ideological ‘faiths’ and of the social organizations once connected with these.”⁴⁹¹ However, they note, efforts to develop a politically neutral media in southern Europe have largely failed and the multi-party – rather than two-party – system in most northern European countries is largely mirrored by the structure of the media. And, as noted above, even the US has been slipping away from the ideals of a separation of press and politics, “Changes in market structure are leading to a re-emergence of political parallelism in the media, and in that sense a convergence toward the pattern of the European media systems,” they wrote.⁴⁹² Meanwhile, French researcher Aralynn Abare McMane reports that there are signs of a movement in the media of France to separate news and opinion, but *journalists continue to diverge from their American brethren on issues like investigative and adversary journalism.*⁴⁹³ Style, as well as substance, is an issue. A study of Danish television found that the “personality-driven techniques” of Anglo-American television presenters were “repugnant” to some Europeans.⁴⁹⁴

If there are differences in approach among US and European journalists, the distinctions between how journalism is practiced in the West and the rest of the world are often even more profound.

2) MEDIA THEORIES

The fundamental framework through which Western media scholars have viewed global journalism is that of the *Four Theories of the Press*. Originally published in 1956, the book was a creature of the Cold War, neatly dividing the world’s media into authoritarian, libertarian, communist and social responsibility systems.⁴⁹⁵ “The press always takes on the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates,” the authors wrote in their introduction.



Especially, it reflects the system of social control whereby the relations of individuals and institutions are adjusted. ... Thus, in the last analysis, the difference between press systems is one of philosophy.⁴⁹⁶

Fifteen years later, Merrill and Lowenstein reduced the number of systems to two, arguing that all systems fall somewhere on spectrum of liberal to totalitarian⁴⁹⁷, but several other scholars instead *added* categories to the original four: “revolutionary,” “developmental,” “Western” (Hachten);⁴⁹⁸ “development” and “democratic participant” theories (Denis McQuail);⁴⁹⁹ and a “social democrat” model that legitimized public intervention (Robert Picard).⁵⁰⁰

The notion that American-style democracy was essential to a free press was at heart of the *Four Theories*, just as it was the basis for the Hutchins Commission recommendations. As Curran and Park said of *Four Theories*, “the most striking feature about this book ... is how little its talented authors needed to know. They display some knowledge of the early American and Russian media, and of the American Colonial and early English press, but little about any other media system.”⁵⁰¹

The tone of “American Exceptionalism” – the idea that it is America’s duty to bring democracy and light to the world⁵⁰² – can also be found in some more recent media analyses. “American journalism rests on a value and belief system that has been developing for more than 200 years. Other nations certainly do not have the foundations on which to place such an institution,” argues Margaret Blanchard.⁵⁰³ Yet the example of Mexico would seem to belie that assumption. There, the transformation of the media largely preceded the political liberalization of the mid-1990s, “despite harassment and resistance from the old regime.”⁵⁰⁴

Curran and Park are among those academics arguing for new ways of understanding international media systems that takes into account seemingly inexorable march toward media liberalization.”⁵⁰⁵ Altshull divides global journalism into three broad systems: the “market press” of the West, driven by profit; the “communitarian press” of the former Soviet bloc, built on the principles of Marxism and Leninism; and the “advancing press” of the developing world, which evolved out of the framework of UNESCO’s efforts in the

1960s to create a “new, more just and more effective world information and communication order.”⁵⁰⁶ He writes of the existence of a “belief system of advancing journalism:”

These ideas (or rather these articles of faith) include belief in the press as a unifying force; belief in the press as an instrument of social justice and a device for beneficial social change; and belief the press is properly an instrument of two-way communication.⁵⁰⁷

3) MEDIA THEORY IN THE NON-WESTERN WORLD

As in the US, the reality of journalism in other parts of the world has often fallen far short of the ideal. While Western organizations such as the Ford Foundation set up institutions designed to establish a development press based on Western-style notions of objectivity and independence, those ideals did not always fit the view that the media should drive development, not question it.⁵⁰⁸ In fact, development journalism has been called “one of the first major attempts to break away from Western concepts of news.”⁵⁰⁹ In the Western perspective, the media sits firmly in what Jurgen Habermas labeled “the public sphere,”⁵¹⁰ the space between the economy and government, where public opinion is formed. In its most idealistic form, journalism acts as “as kind of public square where ideas and issues are discussed openly in a common search for truth.”⁵¹¹ In the development model, media is closely aligned with the government. Ghanaian leader Kwame Nkrumah saw the African newspaper as “a collective educator – a weapon, first and foremost, to overthrow colonialism and imperialism, and to assist total African independence and unity.”⁵¹² Many journalists themselves shared the view of Vivek Goenka, chairman of the powerful *Indian Express* newspaper, that the media should “don a steering mantle when the need may arise” in order to serve society and the nation.⁵¹³ Altshull quotes one Nigerian reporter as asking him: “Why should we be like you? What have your ethics and morality brought the world beside injustice, cruelty, and war?”⁵¹⁴

This perspective was behind UNESCO’s efforts to create a “new world information order” that would reverse the north-south flow of information from the developed to the developing world. Its proponents mocked media theorist Marshall McLuhan’s notion that television had created a “global village.” In an examination of US and Indian coverage of Iran’s Islamic revolution, John V. Vilanilam observed:

If there were 100 residents of this global village, only one would get the opportunity for education beyond school level, 70 would be unable to read and write. Over 50 would be suffering from malnutrition, and over 80 would live in sub-standard housing. Six of the 100 would hold off the entire income of the village. How would these six live in peace with their neighbors without arming themselves to the teeth and supplying arms to those willing to fight their side?⁵¹⁵

In South and Southeast Asia, where development journalism holds sway, audiences give state-run TV and radio channels high marks for trustworthiness.⁵¹⁶ News consumption patterns tend to indicate that large segments of the general public in those regions hold a similar view. But there are also contradictions. In the Philippines, birthplace of “development journalism,” reporters suffered severe repression under the regime of Ferdinand Marcos⁵¹⁷ and today work in an environment that Reporters sans Frontières says is second only to Iraq in danger to journalists.⁵¹⁸ “Development journalism” has spawned a variety of theoretical children, each adopting and translating the broad themes of responsibility and social justice to fit their own specific cultures and political systems, such as the Singapore model in which the media is a partner of government in building the nation and instilling “Asian” or Confucian values.

4) DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM AND THE MUSLIM WORLD

The *Pancasila* press under Suharto’s New Order regime in Indonesia, the world’s most populous Muslim country, embodied many of the concepts of development journalism. *Pancasila* refers to the reigning ideology of the Suharto era, which consisted of five principles designed to unify the far-flung island nation of more than 300 ethnic groups.⁵¹⁹ “The Indonesian press was supposed to be ‘free and responsible,’” writes Janet Steele of George Washington University, in her study of the country’s leading independent magazine. “Yet unlike the Western concept of press freedom, which emphasizes freedom from government control, press freedom in the New Order was understood to mean freedom to assist the state in carrying out programs for social and economic development.”⁵²⁰ Steele says it is likely the guidelines for the *Pancasila* press came from the American Hutchins Commission report, which stressed media responsibility:

In the New Order, “responsible” meant adhering to a set of guidelines prohibiting the reporting of anything that was likely to inflame ethnic, religious, racial, or group (class) tensions.⁵²¹

One of the problems with the literature of media theory, as noted by some critics,⁵²² is that it is predominantly produced from a Western-centric perspective. Even the most commonly-used measures of press “freedom,” such as the widely-cited Freedom House report,⁵²³ view conditions through a decidedly Western prism.⁵²⁴ Contrast Steele’s implied criticism of the Indonesian system with the explanation provided by an Indonesian academic, Onong Uchjana Effendi, who explains that the *Pancasila* press is not ‘free from’ or ‘free to,’ but rather ‘free and’ – because it is free *and* responsible. This “functional freedom,” as journalist-scholar Jakob Oetama put it, means reporters have the freedom *not to* harm society.⁵²⁵ Indonesia is a consensus-oriented culture in which the president is seen as the ultimate father-figure of the national family. In that spirit, the Indonesian Press Council’s 1974 guidelines said it was the responsibility of the press to “hold high the national consensus” and to cooperate with community and government in a manner “inspired by the family principle.”⁵²⁶ Australian Angela Romano’s qualitative survey of 65 Indonesian journalists, conducted in the final years of the Suharto regime, found that the majority of “were fired by a desire to improve their society.”⁵²⁷ She identified five major roles emerging within the group:

[W]atchdog who scrutinizes and critiques the powerful ... agent of empowerment who seeks to enlighten and strengthen the masses ... nation builder who aims to build unity and develop the nation’s social and physical infrastructure ... defender of the truth ... [and] entertainer.⁵²⁸

The majority saw no contradiction between the roles of *Pancasila* journalist and the self-perception of “watchdog” expressed by half the sample. What they did object to was the aggressive way in which that watchdog role manifests in Western journalism. “I do not wish to be a fierce watchdog,” one journalist told Romano. “I wish to be like [the Prophet] Muhammad and to spread a good agenda. Muhammad was not fierce.”⁵²⁹ But they also objected to the reality of “freedom” under the New Order, with 80 percent complaining about restrictions on press freedoms, which included censorship, self-censorship, the closing

of newspapers and physical attacks. Still, some saw these restrictions as an unfortunate necessity. "I do not think the political system is developed enough to encompass the truth," said another reporter.⁵³⁰

A separate survey of 385 Indonesian journalists conducted by Hanitzsch three years after the collapse of the Suharto regime reported somewhat different findings.⁵³¹ By that point, many of the overt controls had been lifted from the Indonesian media sector, with a dramatic increase in the number of journalists and news outlets.⁵³² Indonesia's media was by then rated "partly free" by Freedom House,⁵³³ though journalists continued to be subject to criminal prosecution, threats and persecution at the hands of both business interests and individuals who object to their reporting.⁵³⁴ Indonesian journalists "see themselves as neutral and objective disseminators of news, not as political actors and agents of development," according to Hanitzsch. The journalists rated highly such values as neutrality and the need to "support disadvantaged people." "[S]upporting national development" was considered "extremely important" by less than 25 percent of the sample. However, the findings were anything but clear-cut. Hanitzsch reported that journalists on commercial media outlets – the vast majority of respondents – were both "more skeptical of the government [than those on government-owned outlets] and subscribe to the tradition of objectivity, [and] [a]t the same time, they are more willing to do good for society and its people."⁵³⁵

The survey also revealed that almost 57 percent of the Indonesian journalists accepted the so-called "envelopes" of cash that are a staple of the relationship between reporters and sources in Indonesia, "because they do not see any evidence of being influenced or pressurized" by the bribe.⁵³⁶ Such incentives are a common practice in many countries of the developing world, where journalist salaries are notoriously low⁵³⁷ and, as in Indonesia, a sudden explosion of media outlets in the initial liberalization phase mean few are economically-sustainable.⁵³⁸ Hanitzsch also found notable differences in responses between journalists in the Indonesian capital, Jakarta, and those in other parts of the country, as well as variations in responses among specific ethnic groups. Such results, he argues, underline "the variety of cultural forces in journalism" and keep "us aware of the overly simplistic nature of any attempt to explain variation in journalism culture by a single variable (e.g. gender or race)."⁵³⁹

Indonesian journalists, whom Hanitzsch labeled “educated but timid watchdogs,”⁵⁴⁰ are not alone among journalists in Muslim-majority countries in pairing certain Western journalistic ideal-types with their own cultural values. Across the Strait in Malaysia, where a combination of draconian press laws and widespread ownership of media interests by state-owned holding companies led one US press group to rank the country among the ten worst places to practice journalism,⁵⁴¹ Mindy McAdams of the University of Florida found a wide discrepancy within Malaysia’s news industry between the normative aspirations for Western journalistic values and the empirical reality:

The working journalists profess the same “missions” as Western journalists: They go on and on about truth, public accountability, objectivity, “afflict the comfortable, comfort the afflicted.” They say “watchdog” and “gatekeeper.” They share our language about values and use it in the same way we do ... [but] they all admit that they carefully self-censor to avoid retaliation.

McAdams, who spent a year in Malaysia on a Fulbright journalism fellowship, said that as in Indonesia, bribes were *de riguer*. She said Malaysian journalists justified the system of government controls because Malaysia was a “special case” with a special history, a reference to relations between the ethnic Malay majority and the Chinese minority.⁵⁴²

Malaysia was one of three countries where a content analysis by Brian L. Massey and Li-jing Arthur Chang detected the noticeable impact of “Asian values” and development journalism in news reporting.⁵⁴³ In examining articles from ten online newspapers, Massey and Chang reported that “harmony” and “supportiveness” were the dominant themes in domestic coverage. This was most noticeable in the Singapore, Malaysia and Brunei, the latter two Muslim-majority societies. “The press freedom limits in these three countries may be coincidental to journalists’ role conceptions, or the restrictions could represent the codification of a close state-press relationship that has arisen naturally from a mutual sense of patriotism,” they said.⁵⁴⁴

However, Massey and Chang found as much emphasis on conflict and confrontation in the foreign coverage carried in the news outlets of those three Asian countries as they detected in the Western media. The team speculated that this might be the government’s

way of both implying the superiority of “Asian values” and letting the journalists exercise their professional impulses in a way that doesn’t threaten the domestic status quo:

It could be that conflict and critical reporting are accepted under normative Asian-values journalism when they are directed at the “other.” ... [T]he mark of professionalism on the international stage for Asian journalists could be the similarity between their reporting of a foreign news event and that of their Western counterparts who are also covering it.⁵⁴⁵

5) DEVELOPMENT, SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND ARAB JOURNALISM

Supporting the economic and social development of Arab society is one of the pillars of Arab journalism. Arab media scholars generally propose three main theories to describe the prevailing media system: developmental, social responsibility and “dependency,” the latter referring to the region’s dependence on Western media system models. In reality, developmental and social responsibility approaches to journalism are close – and usually overlapping – cousins, particularly when it comes to the Arab world. From the earliest days of the Nasser’s Free Officers revolution in 1952, the Egyptian press was “regulated so that it promoted the government’s developmental aims by writing about governmental projects and encouraging people to buy locally manufactured goods,” according to Arab journalist and scholar Noha Mellor.⁵⁴⁶

Egyptian media scholar Basyouni Hamada argues that social responsibility is the best model for the Arab world because, he says, while it is the job of media in the developing world to serve both national development and political stability, government ownership of the media is not necessary for that to take place.⁵⁴⁷ In contrast, Farouk Abu Zeid says development theory offers the best model for Arab media. But his reasons underline the fact that the debate may obscure a distinction without a difference. He defines *khavar* as “an account that describes accurately and objectively an event or idea which affects and meets the interests of the majority of readers while contributing to the development of society.”⁵⁴⁸ Journalists surveyed in As-Said Bekhait’s study of Egyptian news values were in synch with that view, reporting that they felt a social responsibility toward their country. However, a critical question is how and when that feeling of responsibility is put into practice. The journalists admitted that they skewed their coverage to fit the priorities of their

newspaper's owners, be it the government, political parties or other special interests.⁵⁴⁹ Therein lies the inherent reality of Arab media, the "development of society" has traditionally translated to mean the glorification of real or imagined triumphs of the regime, and the journalist's "responsibility" is toward preserving the status quo.⁵⁵⁰

Muslim thinkers have always been scathing about such "false news" spread by governments via journalists who have neither "knowledge" (*'ilm*) nor authority (*sulta*). The Muslim Brotherhood's leading theorist, Said Qutb, was dismissive of the Arab media, claiming it neither influenced, nor was influenced by public opinion, but was simply a mouthpiece for corrupt regimes,⁵⁵¹ thus failing the first test of *haqq* (truth). "Circulate knowledge and teach the ignorant, for knowledge does not vanish except when it is kept secretly," Umar ibn Abdul Aziz (682-720) wrote to Abu Bakr ibn Muhammad ibn Hazm (d. 737), according to the *hadith* (1:3:98).⁵⁵² However, it can be argued that the banning of printing by the *ulema* (religious scholars) was itself an "illegitimate monopolization of knowledge,"⁵⁵³ violating that precept and setting the precedent for state control of media in the Arab world.

Social responsibility is a guiding principle of scholars such as Sayeed al-Seini who advocate an Islamic approach to journalism, but it is in the context of the journalist's duty to support the concept of *amar bi al-Maruf wa nahi an al-munkar* (commanding the right and prohibiting the wrong).⁵⁵⁴ Mohammad Siddiqi of Western Illinois University notes:

Throughout Islamic history many institutions as well as channels of mass communications such as mosques, *azan*, and Friday *khutba* have used this concept of social responsibility to mobilize public opinion and persuade individuals to work for the collective good of society in general and for their own individual pursuit of good in this world and the hereafter.⁵⁵⁵

Siddiqi defines news as "the reporting of events in a way which fulfils the needs of Muslim society" and leads to "peace and stability in conformity with the moral and ethical principles of Islam."⁵⁵⁶ He says Islam offers "a strong tradition" on which reporters can draw, including "critical evaluation of the sources of news," sound methods of verification and documentation, and a commitment to context and fairness.⁵⁵⁷ American Muslim convert

Abdullah Schleifer, a long-time Cairo bureau chief for NBC News and journalism professor at The American University in Cairo, says Western norms of journalism – that the public has “the right to know” and that “nothing is sacred” – are “inherently anti-Islamic.”

“What is news [to Western journalists]? Peace, stability and continuity is not news but conflict, contention and disorder is. Respectability and moral conformity (an Islamic virtue...) is not news, but erupting scandal is.

Schleifer, who later became Washington, D.C. bureau chief for the Arab satellite channel Al Arabiya, says Islamic journalism offers an alternative that

Encourage[s] good and discourage[s] evil by providing “news” written in a professionally acceptable, objective style that honors truth; that encourages the belief and practice of Islam and discourages practices and beliefs that deny Islam...⁵⁵⁸

But Schleifer warns Islamic journalists against the pitfalls of tunnel-vision:

The specific danger of “Islamic journalism” to date is that the journalist substitutes the life and activities of the various Islamic movements for the life and activities of the much broader Islamically conscious society.⁵⁵⁹

Opposing the Islamic theorists are those who argue for a more secular Arabization of the region’s media. In place of religion, figures such as Rasim Mohammed al-Jammal of Cairo University and Ulaiwa Hasan emphasize the need to end both state media monopolies and the dominance of Western information channels in the Arab world, restructuring media systems to enhance Arab solidarity and bolster cultural mores.⁵⁶⁰

6) INTERNATIONAL MEDIA VALUES

Journalism has been defined as “a set of cultural practices.”⁵⁶¹ But the Western model does not always take into account the possibility of journalistic sub-cultures governed by varying values, norms and mores as influenced by the broader cultural practices of the society in which the journalist functions. Comparing the results of journalist surveys in 21 countries, Weaver concluded that while, “There are strong national differences that override any universal professional norms or values of journalism around the world.”⁵⁶² On specific

journalistic ideal-types, the surveys found a general agreement on the need to get information to the public quickly (as noted above, a top priority for American journalists), but there was “considerably less agreement” on the need to investigate government claims, with countries that did not have a long history of democratic governance giving the “watchdog” role a low priority. Journalists also expressed “considerable differences” on issues such as the analytical function of the media, the need to entertain the public, reporting practices and ethics, such as the use of confidential sources and paying for information, and the importance of reporting accurately and objectively.⁵⁶³

Even among those who did rate objectivity highly, there was a tendency in follow-up questions to express the belief that reporting facts alone was not enough. That was particularly true among those who have experienced a period of political change. Describing the differences in responses between younger Spanish journalists and those who grew up professionally under the Franco regime, Maria Jose Canel and Antonio Pique of the University of Navarra noted a pattern which may have implications for other emerging democracies:

Journalists who have undergone the process to democracy fully established as professionals are more advocate than impartial, interpretive than factual, and more supportive than critical. They are more likely to identify with a party than young journalists and to be committed to certain beliefs. They regard as important influencing the public and championing ideas and values.⁵⁶⁴

The perspectives are many. Almost half of all Polish journalists surveyed did not see political or business activities as a threat to objectivity, though a majority espoused the ideal of objectivity;⁵⁶⁵ Brazilian journalists “seemed to embrace the interpretive/investigative and the adversary roles much more than did US journalists;”⁵⁶⁶ and where Mexican journalists conceived their profession as active and adversarial, Chilean journalists saw themselves as “neutral reporters and entertainers of the public,” while their Ecuadorian colleagues exhibited a more “developmental journalism” orientation.⁵⁶⁷ Columbian journalist Maria Cristina Caballero has written that “journalism in countries like mine can go far beyond

reporting and writing. It's about more than getting scoops. It's about trying to help create an environment in which peace is possible."⁵⁶⁸

Based on surveys in Tanzania⁵⁶⁹ and Nepal,⁵⁷⁰ in which journalists were asked to rank a list of 31 functions, Jyotika Ramaprasad and James D. Kelly theorized that journalistic roles fell into two major categories, development journalism and democracy building/entertainment, which the authors labeled "libertine" or "free press" versus "developmental."⁵⁷¹ "Libertine" contained such major categories as evaluating and analyzing policy, while "developmental" involved supporting government development efforts and using news as "social good." When a sample of 108 Bangladeshi journalists was asked to rank those functions, the result indicated that "Bangladeshi journalists consider libertine functions more important than development functions." But there was a narrow margin between the two. "Provide information in a timely manner," received the highest ranking, as it did in the US surveys, but the second-highest number of responses went to, "Use the media to advance the social development of the country," a distinctly "developmental" function. The journalists were asked to rate the importance of various functions then indicate how frequently they actually carried them out. As is so frequently the case, the researchers found "a gap between perceived importance and actual practice for most functions."⁵⁷² For example, "Examine government policies and decisions critically" was ranked high in importance by the journalists, but they indicated it was actually implemented only 65 percent of the time.⁵⁷³ The authors speculated as to the reason for the gap:

In developing countries where control of the press by political leaders has been the norm, criticism of policies and practices has not become common practice. ... Even journalists have some difficulty in directly criticizing leaders given the tradition in many of these societies of respect for or awe or fear of authority as well as indirect communication styles.⁵⁷⁴

As for the readiness of journalist to accept development functions "as part of their jobs," the authors note:

[D]evelopment is an important economic sector in developing countries and its vocabulary permeates discussion. ... Journalists cannot possibly escape

this influence. ... Extending the expectation of communication of development messages to the news media is not as much of a stretch in local thinking as it might be in the West.⁵⁷⁵

In a small study by Xiaoming Hao, 34 journalists from 29 countries were asked to sort 50 opinion statements about journalistic functions. He found that while all generally “agreed about the importance of the freedom of the press, journalistic autonomy and news media’s public service role and watchdog function, they disagreed on government-press relations, press ownership and how to handle abuses of press freedom.”⁵⁷⁶ The author concluded that although “the cultural distinction was not absolute in determining how journalists landed on the factors, it was the only significant variable in explaining the formation of the factors.”⁵⁷⁷

A study of Brazilian journalists found them practicing a mix of journalistic approaches. “Brazilian journalists perceive themselves as emulating an American journalistic model, but they also appear to be driven by some of the old French journalistic elements, such as the tendency to produce a more opinionated, partisan journalism,” the author reported.

It is possible that Brazilian journalists are seeking a Brazilian interpretation of the American model just like the French journalists have been seeking a French interpretation of the American model.⁵⁷⁸

The author quoted one leading magazine editor as stating that Brazilian journalism was “imitating the appearance but not the substance of American journalism.”⁵⁷⁹

The gap between normative aspirations and empirical reality was evident in a study of Chilean journalists, which revealed “a wide breach or contradiction” between what Chilean journalists “understood as important values for journalists [and] their commitment to those values.”⁵⁸⁰ While the journalists ranked veracity, critical thinking and independence as ideal-types,⁵⁸¹ their perception of how those values were exercised in real life revealed an “attitude of dependency and passivity.”⁵⁸² South African journalists revealed an even more basic problem prevalent across the developing world: “interviewees stated that” 30 to 60 percent of reporters “lacked the ability to develop a story or identify story ideas.”⁵⁸³ The

South African media is still trying to emerge from the apartheid system, in which Black journalists were given few opportunities. On the eve of independence, Nelson Mandela decried the state of the media. "It is clearly inequitable that in a country whose population is overwhelmingly Black ... the principal players in the media have no knowledge of the life experience of that majority," he told an international press gathering.⁵⁸⁴ A decade later, the aforementioned study found a lack of analytical and critical skills, a lack of creativity, enterprise and personal accountability. Though South Africa presents an extreme example, the struggle to build a foundation of professionalism is a common one in countries emerging from authoritarian rule.

In Eastern Europe after the collapse of Communism, "the explosive growth in the number of [media] outlets created a plethora of journalistic positions for which no new, trained, professional cadres and leaders were available."⁵⁸⁵ The new elite of journalism emerged from among the intellectuals of the anti-Communist underground press – journalist-polemicists carrying with them a tradition of advocacy and "doing their best to advance the cause of their own political and personal views."⁵⁸⁶ A poll of Polish journalists conducted in 1990 found them espousing Western ideal-types such as impartiality, objectivity, enterprise, ingenuity and courage, but, according to Karol Jakubowski of Polish Radio and TV, those ideals "were soon found to be lacking" as the old Communist press system was dismantled and Polish journalists embarked on a long search for identity in the free-for-all that followed.⁵⁸⁷ Those same "malformed structures of public communication" existed in Hungary as it made a similar transition. An absence of training; bribery, due in part to poor pay; cronyism; and sensationalism all remained huge challenges a decade after the yoke of Soviet rule had been thrown off. While a formal code of ethics was produced, in reality "ethical standards and the concept of the journalists' role in society [were] in disarray."⁵⁸⁸

Indeed, Peter Gross observes that across Eastern Europe, "the lack of a clear sense of the professional values underlying journalistic enterprise" has led the region's journalists to exhibit a lack of respect for verifiable information, mislead themselves into believing they are "discoverers of truth" rather than "providers of accurate, verifiable, balanced, complete facts;" see themselves as "sociopolitical and cultural leaders;" and refuse to cooperate with

fellow journalists. The perception among journalists was that of the media as “counter-power” to the government, rather than adversary or watchdog, with an “absence both of a consensus on journalistic values, roles and standards” and of objective journalism.⁵⁸⁹

7) ARABISM, ISLAM & JOURNALISTIC IDENTITY

At first glance, the theoretical functions of information in the Islamic context are strikingly similar to the norms of Western journalism. Islamic journalism theorist Mar'i Makdur offers this definition of the requirements for news in the Islamic press: News should (1) be useful and relevant; (2) create knowledge; (3) contain objective images of events, thoughts and phenomenon; (4) be free from opinions; and (5) should harmonize with the Islamic faith.⁵⁹⁰

There have been relatively few surveys that examine the self-perceptions of Arab journalists. In a 1987 study, Mohamed Kirat of Indiana University surveyed 75 Algerian journalists to assess their professional characteristics and attitudes toward various journalistic norms. He concluded that, “Algerian journalists conceive of the role and philosophy of the press within the Algerian context.”⁵⁹¹ That included a strong developmental journalism framework, with priority to the promotion of social change and economic development.⁵⁹² Fully one quarter of the journalists defined news as, “Events that have something to do with the government,” indicative of the strong government influence on Algeria’s media system.⁵⁹³ In another example of the gap between the normative and the empirical, 45 percent of the journalists surveyed said it was extremely important or very important to criticize the government when needed, which “contradicts the realities of Algerian journalism in practice.”⁵⁹⁴

Algeria is an Arab socialist state shaped by its bloody revolution against the French. That history was reflected in the fact that more than 73 percent of the journalists said it was extremely important for the media to “counterattack foreign propaganda,” yet they perceived their second most important function to be one in line with Western journalistic norms: “Get the information to the public quickly.” In many other ways, the Algerian journalists differed from their Western counterparts, with large percentages seeing it as their job to “educate and form a modern Algerian citizen” (69%) and “enhance the objectives of the social revolution” (56%).

Religion plays an important role in the self-image of the Algerian journalist. Almost half saw it as their duty to “enhance the Islamic values among the population” (48%) and “religious training” came second only to “newsroom learning” as the most important influence in shaping their ethics⁵⁹⁵ (notably, newsroom learning also rates at the top of influences cited by US journalists).⁵⁹⁶

The importance of religion was also emphasized in a survey of journalists working on seven Saudi newspapers carried out by Abdulkader Tash in the early 1980s. He found that nearly all of the 149 journalists responding to his survey viewed the enhancement of Islamic principles of the Saudi people as an important function of the media.⁵⁹⁷ Propagation of Islamic values was also cited as a top priority by 65 percent of newspaper journalists surveyed in Kuwait at about the same time, with large majorities on two of the five papers holding that view.⁵⁹⁸ However, spreading Islamic values still fell ninth on the group’s overall list of priorities, after such functions as concentrating on news which is of widest interest, influencing public opinion, investigating government claims, getting information to the public as quickly as possible, and helping achieve the goals of government development plans.⁵⁹⁹ As in Algeria, the journalists in Kuwait – the majority of whom were Muslims but not Kuwaitis – listed religion and family upbringing as “extremely influential” in shaping their ethics, but ranked more senior journalist role models as the number one influence.⁶⁰⁰ In a separate study, chief news editors at government-run Kuwait Radio and Television denied that their religious beliefs influenced selection of news for broadcasts, but fully one-third said their “personal values and opinions” did shape story choices,⁶⁰¹ raising questions about to what degree religious beliefs and personal values can be separated in a Muslim society, in which Islam is said to provide a “complete system of life for the Muslim community in all its details.”⁶⁰²

Beyond religious considerations, the Saudi journalists expressed the need for a balance between the needs of the public and the needs of the government and showed little enthusiasm for complete independence. Freedom of the press was rated as the single most important need by only 20 percent of the Saudis, about the same number who said more professionally-qualified Saudi journalists were needed, and Tash noted that many of the more sensitive questions on the survey were left unanswered. In contrast, the newspaper

journalists in Kuwait said they would be willing to publish confidential government documents without permission and leaned toward a participant press function.⁶⁰³ They also expressed a much higher regard for their profession than the Saudi journalists. Part of the reason for this difference may lay in the fact that Kuwait has had a relatively free press since its "liberation" from the Iraqis in 1991, and the majority of journalists there are from Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and other parts of the Arab world,⁶⁰⁴ thus under different kinds of constraints from the Saudi nationals operating in a tight-controlled press system where the news media follow the "official line."⁶⁰⁵

Not surprisingly, the story for the chief editors at Kuwait TV and Radio was very different. The chief editors avoided news stories that they considered to be against the interests of Kuwait, the Arab world or "friendly countries;" religiously- or morally-unacceptable; propaganda for Iraq or Israel; lacking news value; or for which they didn't have adequate resources (e.g. video).⁶⁰⁶ Only the last two would likely be sufficient reason to kill a story in a Western newsroom. The editors also confirmed what was already obvious to their audiences; 96.6 per cent agreed with the statement, "I put news about the emir or the crown prince in the first portion of the newscast."⁶⁰⁷ But such strictures are not limited to government-owned news organs. The Kuwait TV and radio findings were in keeping with a 1988 study of newscasts on government-owned stations in four Arab countries, which found that to editors on the government channels, "news had to be ideologically oriented." In the view of the editors on the government-controlled stations, "news is not neutral."⁶⁰⁸ They "ideally sought a balance between the good and the bad, the hard and the soft news. In practice, however, domestic news concentrated on the official and the positive."⁶⁰⁹

The role of Arab nationalism in shaping the self-identity of Arab journalists was evident in a series of surveys of Arab journalists who took part in training sessions organized by the BBC World Service Trust. The 150 media workers surveyed indicated strong agreement with the statement that journalism ethics are "mostly determined by the ideological and political inclinations" of the news organization for which they work (Syrians 74%; Lebanese 44%), while half of the Egyptian journalists said they thought the private media in their country focused "on the commercial aspect even if it comes at the expense of editorial integrity." Tellingly, 70 percent of the Egyptian journalists said they did not

depend on the Egyptian media as their primary source of information about local issues. Almost the same number of Lebanese said local reporting was characterized by “political bias of news media organizations,” a view with which 41 percent of Syrian journalists agreed.

The Syrian regime has been in a constant state of confrontation with Israel for a half-century, and 76 percent of Syrian journalists said it was their job to preserve “a nationalistic momentum through a defined media strategy.”⁶¹⁰ Roughly two-thirds of the journalists said the US position on Palestine was the issue that most affected media attitudes toward the United States and the same percentage of the Syrians also said “constant bias against the American presence no matter what happens on the ground” characterized Syrian coverage of the Iraq conflict. It has been argued that a free press can only exist within a democratic system. The Arab journalists appeared to agree, overwhelmingly endorsing the statement that, “A democratic regime is essential for a free press” (Syrians 61%; Lebanese 60%; Egyptians 61%). However, it is important to remember that many authoritarian regimes in the Arab world portray themselves as “democratic.” The code of ethics adopted by Egyptian journalists in 1972 called democracy “the only healthy and sound framework for practicing political liberties”⁶¹¹ even though the country has effectively been a presidential dictatorship for a half-century.⁶¹²

The primacy of Palestine as a marker of Arab identity was also apparent in Ramaprasad’s survey of Egyptian journalists, conducted with Naila Nabil Hamdy of The American University in Cairo.⁶¹³ The pair replicated Ramaprasad and Kelly’s Nepal study,⁶¹⁴ with the addition of six statements specific to Egypt’s Arab and Islamic heritage. “Support the cause of the Palestinians” recorded the highest mean score (4.74 on a five-point scale) and “Defend Islamic societies, traditions and values” drew a 4.53 score. Other top responses included “Preserve Arabic culture” (4.38), “Strengthen spiritual and moral values” (4.26), “Spread a message of pan-Arab unity” (4.16), “Cultivate nationalism/patriotism” (4.24) and “Use the media to advance the social development of the country” (4.22). However, two functions closely associated with Western journalistic mores ranked second and third: “Provide information in a timely manner” (4.72) and “Provide accurate information” (4.68).

An analysis of the 36 questions revealed that those grouped in the category “Support Arabism/Values” far outscored the other three categories, drawing a 4.50 on the five-point scale (the other categories were “Sustain Democracy” (3.90), “Provide Entertainment” (3.78) and “Support Government/Country” (3.29)). “Egyptian reporters are socialized into considering supporting Arabism/Islam as a basic function of journalism along with providing timely and accurate information,” according to Ramaprasad and Hamdy.⁶¹⁵

When the team examined actual performance of the various functions, “Support Arabism/Values,” which is not present in a Western journalistic milieu, was the category of functions journalists were most often able to perform and “Sustain Democracy,” the dominant media function in Western democracies, was rated last. “Support Government/Country,” the group of functions most often associated with the developing world, came in third, after “Provide Entertainment,” another function associated with Western journalism. The pair concluded:

Egyptian journalists consider supporting the government, which was the crux of the acrimonious debate over journalism during the UNESCO-situated debate on the New World Information Order, only average in importance. It is support for the Palestinian cause, Islamic values, pan-Arabism and such that takes center stage with these journalists.⁶¹⁶

Arab and Islamic values also play a large role in the various ethical codes of journalism in the Arab and broader Islamic worlds. In an exhaustive comparison of the codes of Arab and non-Arab Muslim-majority countries and those of European nations, German scholar Kai Hafez found that a “deep divide between the European and some Arab and Islamic codes exists with respect to the role tradition, mores, and religion play in journalism ethics.”⁶¹⁷

...sensitivity to personal rights in Oriental codes is accompanied by much lower degree of freedom when it comes to news touching upon interests of the state, the nation, or religion.⁶¹⁸

The Arab and Islamic codes espoused many of the same normative journalistic values as those of Europe, speaking of the need for “adherence to objective reality and

truth" (Federation of Arab Journalists), a "commitment to the requirements of ethics, reliability and truth" (Egyptian Press Syndicate), and the requirement that news reporting be "fair and objective" (General Assembly of the Committee of the Press, Pakistan). There is also much talk of "freedom."⁶¹⁹ But they come with conditions.

Although ideas of freedom have entered formal media ethics in the Middle East and the Islamic world, only a minority of documents limit the interference into freedom to cases where other fundamental rights (e.g., privacy) are touched, whereas the majority would have journalists accept political, national, religious, or cultural boundaries to their work.⁶²⁰

In an article presenting an Islamic perspective on journalism ethics and responsibility, Siddiqi observes that "[T]he meaning and values assigned to concepts such as news, truth, objectivity, freedom, people's right to know, and facts, may change according to particular circumstances or according to the needs and priorities of a particular society at a particular time."⁶²¹ Turkey's press charter is unique in that it endorses censorship in the name of freedom:

Nothing that restricts freedom of thought, conscience or expression or is damaging or offensive to public morals, religious sentiments or the foundations of the institution of family shall be published.⁶²²

The Saudi Arabian Media Charter declares that "the mass media oppose destructive trends, atheistic tendencies, materialistic philosophies and attempts to divert Muslims from their faith" and guarantees freedom of expression "within the framework of Islamic and national objectives and values."⁶²³ Its "guidelines" go on to say that the media's job includes "the promotion of the idea of obedience to God, His Messenger, parents and guardians and preservation of the established order" and the protection of "the higher interests of Arabs and Muslims."⁶²⁴

Hafez observes that ethics codes in Middle Eastern and Islamic world "often reveal a defensive culture, calling on journalists to protect themselves, their audience, and society from dangerous foreign influences," including that of the foreign media. The 1980 Islamic Mass Media charter, adopted at the first Islamic Media Conference in Jakarta, Indonesia,

represents one of the most conservative approaches to journalism in the Muslim world. It contains an unyielding injunction: "Islamic media-men should censor all materials which are either broadcast or published in order to protect the *Ummah* from influences which are harmful to Islamic character and values." Such a draconian approach to journalism is rejected by the overwhelming majority of Muslim journalists and contradicts other ethical codes of Arab and Islamic countries.⁶²⁵ In contrast to Saudi Arabia, the most recent code of ethics in Indonesia's Alliance of Independent Journalists is one that most closely resembles Western codes.

With the exception of the Islamic Charter, Hafez found that countries on the "Islamic periphery" imposed fewer conditions than those in the Arab heartland, a fact that would appear to underscore the effect of localized political systems and ethnic or national identity on macro-level mores. Arab codes contained widespread references to the need for journalists to safeguard "national identity," the "Arab nation" or "Arab homeland" and defend "patriotic values." It is the duty of journalism to render "a cultural, social, patriotic, national and humanitarian service" and "mobilize public opinion in defense of the country," says Lebanon's code, adopted before the civil war. Egypt's 1996 code demands "adherence to the patriotic and moral values of the Egyptian society."⁶²⁶

Interestingly, a 10-nation poll carried out in the spring of 2006 found that public trust in media was highest in Indonesia (88%), followed by two other Muslim-majority countries, Nigeria (86%), Egypt (74%), and India (82%), which has the second-largest Muslim population in the world. In all those countries (except Egypt, where the question was not asked) trust in media dramatically out-ranked trust in government. While almost 90 percent of Indonesians said the media strikes the right balance between freedom of speech and respect for cultures, the response in the other three countries was in the 60-70 percent range and, again with the exception of Indonesia, only 41-47 percent of those surveyed in Nigeria, Egypt and India agreed that "journalists are able to report freely."⁶²⁷

Neither the Arab nor the broader Islamic world is a monolith. Each is made up of a wide array of cultures, traditions, belief systems and ethnicities. So, too, the ethical codes of those regions. Hafez reports that

even though various Arab and Islamic codes reveal a strong tendency toward traditionalism, they draw upon different secular or religious Islamic legacies that are clearly shaped by the national or organizational interests of those who designed [them]. While “tradition” is usually expected to refer to a fixed canon of historical habits, ways of thought, and so on, there is, in fact, no consensus on the contents of tradition among different journalistic codes of the Middle East and the Islamic world.⁶²⁸

8) GLOBAL JOURNALISM

So to what degree *do* journalists around the world share a basic set of norms and values? Writing of the evolution of Nigerian journalists 30 years ago, Peter Golding argued that “professionalism is induced in the form of an ideological convergence, a necessary emulation of the objectives and definitions of ... foreign media.”⁶²⁹ But, as documented above, that convergence is not always a smooth one, given “the complicated cultural, political and socio-economic structure in which the journalist operates.”⁶³⁰ Some scholars, such as Alex Edelstein, believe that the very concept of professionalism “is a culture-laden concept that cannot be applied usefully to the Third World journalist” who faces “structural barriers to the attainment of this status.”⁶³¹ Others go so far as to say that even American journalists cannot be considered to be part of a “profession” in its strictest sense, because “there is no system of abstract propositions to which new recruits are exposed and without which they cannot practice.”⁶³² In short, anyone can call him or herself a journalist, and in this age of bloggers and “online journalism”, anyone does.⁶³³

Then there is the argument that journalism should, in fact, evolve in synch with the political and cultural milieu in which it operates. African media scholar Francis Nyamnjoh makes a strong argument that there is an essential conflict of value frameworks between Western media norms – and those of the liberal-democratic societies they represent – and the community consciousness of most African societies.

Almost everywhere, liberal democratic assumptions have been made about the media and their role in democratization and society, with little regard to the histories, cultures and sociologies of African societies. The difficulties of media in action must be understood not only as failures but also, and more

importantly, as pointers to the very inadequacies of the liberal democratic model in Africa.⁶³⁴

In the context of Eastern Europe, Gross believes that while the Western ideal-values of journalism might be something which journalists in societies in transition will eventually adopt, in the meantime

the media need to play still other roles: they need to serve as socializers, as champions of a democratic political culture, and, to that end, as teachers and mobilizers (in the larger sense of the word) and not simply guard dogs and disseminators of information.⁶³⁵

In comparing the results of surveys of journalists in 21 countries, predominantly from the West and *developed* world, Weaver ultimately concludes that the absence of agreement on the norms and values of journalism prevent the emergence of "universal occupational standards."⁶³⁶ Similarly, in terms of the *developing* world, Romano observes that:

"With so many different definitions of development (or liberation or human development or emancipation or good governance) and how it should be achieved, and so many different socio-political systems in the developing world, it would appear not merely difficult, but in fact futile to attempt to devise a coherent, universal development press model."⁶³⁷

When Kirat compared his own Algerian results to surveys of American, Nigerian and Saudi journalists, he found that "each group of journalists conceives of the role of the press according to the peculiarities of its country."⁶³⁸ Merrill sees a unifying trait among journalists, but it is, on the surface, a dark one. "In spite of varying moral and religious values around the world, there is one dominant perspective that affects every press system's ethics: Machiavellianism."

This might be national progress or supremacy; it might be achieving political party objectives; it might be cooperating with or contending with government; it might be making profits for the institution or individual

person or family; it might be propagating certain perspectives or values. But whatever the purpose, the desire is to succeed ... using whatever means will work.⁶³⁹

While he acknowledges "slivers of moral concern" among journalists, Merrill worries that the media, "as part of Big Business in its giant corporate and internationalized power, has become a kind of mental and emotional form of Leviathan that oppresses and exploits."⁶⁴⁰ He and others warn of the danger involved in forcing Western values and mores on emerging media systems: "[I]t is counterproductive or even dangerous for the West to try to impose on all countries a libertarian journalism. Certain countries, due to international power circumstances, may for a time be drawn to a free press, but it might be contrary to the natural national or regional realities."⁶⁴¹ Yet Merrill betrays a streak of Orientalism when he argues that because "[m]ost of these countries are still close to tribalism ... centralization of power is important and ... Machiavellianism in government, and by projection, in the mass media is not a negative."⁶⁴² He might want to run that theory past the 125 journalists imprisoned around the world in 2005, or the families of the 338 reporters killed in the decade ending that year. However, his basic point stands: not every journalist puts the American system on a pedestal.

9) JOURNALISTIC IDENTITY

Journalists – like everyone else – are shaped by a complex mix of factors which together mold their worldview; so, too, their news organizations. And as this writer documented in his study of post-9/11 polarization of attitudes between the US and the Muslim world, those worldviews ultimately shape their reporting.⁶⁴³ The effect of the audience to whom they are reporting also has a substantial impact on shaping coverage. "To survive, a newspaper must reflect a specific audience," according to *Chicago Tribune* publisher Fuller. "It must share with its readers a sensibility and a set of interests, tastes and values."⁶⁴⁴ Those "values" may vary slightly between cities and regions in the US or Europe; they are likely to vary dramatically between cultures, such as those of the Judeo-Christian West and the Muslim world. "Moral discernment and behavior are based on internalized values arising from past choices and experiences," according to Sidney Callahan.⁶⁴⁵

In an examination of the literature on professional identities among journalists around the world, Indiana University professor Mark Deuze concludes that while the existence of journalism schools on every continent and international academic journals about the industry would seem to suggest that journalism as an object of practice and study is based on “a consensual body of knowledge [and] a widely shared understanding of key theories and methods ... [a]las, this is not the case.”⁶⁴⁶

Although the ideology of journalism is an approach widely used in the literature, only rarely has it been adequately defined and operationalized to fit immediate concerns in a pragmatic way ... only rarely do their approaches, understandings or philosophies meet.⁶⁴⁷

However, Deuze cites his own examination of national news cultures in three European countries,⁶⁴⁸ Australia and the US, as well as another four-country study,⁶⁴⁹ to endorse Dahlgren’s notion of a “dominant ideology” of journalism.⁶⁵⁰ Deuze concludes:

What these overall findings and conclusions suggest is that journalists in elective democracies share similar characteristics and speak of similar values in the context of their daily work, but apply these in a variety of ways to give meaning to what they do.⁶⁵¹

Deuze goes on to set out five ideal-typical values of “journalism’s ideology,” based largely on the core norms and values of American journalism as cited above by Kovach and Rosentheil: (1) public service, (2) neutrality or objectivity, (3) autonomy, (4) a sense of immediacy, (5) and a sense of ethics and legitimacy.⁶⁵² The ideal-types are in line with Weaver’s contention that journalists around the world are bound by a common desire to operate in an environment free of censorship, government and corporate pressures, editorial autonomy and an environment that fosters professional growth.⁶⁵³

However, since it is empirically based on Western journalistic cultures in “elective democracies,” Deuze’s model is not necessarily applicable elsewhere in the world. And, as noted above, even in the US that American ideal-type is rarely attained. According to the authoritative *State of the News Media* report in 2006, roughly half of all journalists felt American journalism was “going in the wrong direction,” plagued by a tendency to avoid

complex issues (86%), sacrifice accuracy for immediacy (50%), timidity (56%) and sloppy reporting (52%).⁶⁵⁴ Such findings lead some scholars, such as Beate Josephi, to ask, “[W]hy should a model stay a model if it is so far removed from what is actually practiced in newsrooms around the world?”⁶⁵⁵

10) THE CULTURE OF JOURNALISM: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

For all the talk of the “culture” or “ideology” of journalism, Thomas Hanitzsch argues that there have been few attempts to elaborate on precisely what a journalistic “culture” consists of in the international realm.⁶⁵⁶ “[J]ournalism culture’ has become an increasingly vague concept, inviting misunderstanding and theoretical ambiguity,” he says.⁶⁵⁷ This is, in part, because the bulk of cross-cultural journalism research has been cross-national rather than at the macro-societal systematic level. Stephen Reese of the University of Texas-Austin concurs: “Comparing across systems yields different insights than comparing within and calls for crucial distinctions between the phenomenon of interest and its surrounding structural context.”⁶⁵⁸

Reese has proposed a “hierarchy-of-influences” model for understanding what he calls “the global journalist.” This involves taking into account the individual attitudes, training and background of the journalist; the routines of his/her job; the goals and policies of the organization for which s/he works; the other institutions with which the journalist comes into contact; and an “ideological” perspective that examines how all of the above interact “within a web of organizational and ideological constraints.”⁶⁵⁹

Reese adapts this approach from a theory of the same name he developed earlier with Pamela Shoemaker. That original hierarchy of influences model was built on the basic assumption that, “Mass media content is a socially created product, not a reflection of an objective reality.”⁶⁶⁰ The approach posits that the influences on media content can be ranked hierarchically from ideology and system-level factors down to the characteristics of individual media workers, with each level subsuming the one below. Elements of this hierarchy include the background, personal attitudes and role of the journalist; the routines of the journalistic job; organizational influences such as ownership, degree to which it is profit-driven, management style, and proximity of the corporate ownership to the news organization itself and the “community” it covers; “extramedia” influences such as

relationship to sources, advertisers and government, and the size and characteristics of the organization's area of coverage. Finally, drawing on Gramsci's theory of hegemony,⁶⁶¹ Shoemaker and Reese factor in "ideological" influences, such as relationship with society's elites, perception of what is accepted by society and what is "deviant," and, in international news, the prevailing sense of the relative political, economic or cultural relevance of a country to the one in which the news organization is based.⁶⁶²

The original work was fairly Amero-centric, with many references to the US newsroom, and observations – e.g. "[T]elevision coverage will be more ideologically charged than the print media," and "The journalistic routine of objectivity overrules an individual's tendency to communicate his or her opinion"⁶⁶³ – that are questionable at best when discussing journalism in other parts of the world, but its broader theoretical components can readily be adapted to the international media landscape.

In the Arab context, for example, the shift from direct government ownership of television channels to more (semi-) independent models has had a profoundly liberating effect on the style of coverage. But, as Sakr has documented, the dominance of oligarchies on the regional level and cronyism on the local/national level means the practice of journalism is wildly uneven.⁶⁶⁴ Other elements of the model also ring true: Distance from the scene of news events gives the pan-Arab channels far more freedom than terrestrial news organizations; economic pressure from investors and advertisers is a daily reality for many Arab editors; and the idea of a dominant media narrative – or "news frame"⁶⁶⁵ – about what is accepted and what is "deviant" can be seen on the pages of newspapers and television screens on almost any given day. It was that flexibility that enabled Reese to adapt the model for what he describes as a "sociology-of-media" approach that investigates "the structural context of journalism on the international stage."

Simplifying the original hierarchy-of-influences structure, Reese posits five key levels that influence the process of gathering and disseminating news. The most basic is the individual level, which acknowledges that, first and foremost, the "power to shape news is held by the individual journalist, whose attitudes, training and background are studied." A second factor Reese takes into account are the routines involved in the collection and processing of news, which, he says, limit the ability of journalists to "act on their beliefs and

attitudes.” At the organizational level, the model focuses on who wields power and how it is exercised. Who makes decisions? How are they enforced? What are the boundaries of the organization and do journalists voluntarily choose not to cross them? In other words, do they self-censor? The extra-media level examines the way news organizations are subordinated to larger interests, whether that involves networks of corporate relationships, socio-political ties, or other “systematic, patterned, and ongoing ways media are connected with their host society.” And finally, the ideological level pulls together all the other strands to reach a conclusion about “how media symbolic content is connected with larger social interests.”⁶⁶⁶

Reese acknowledges that a lack of agreement on journalistic values and quality complicates implementation of the model, but insists it minimizes the Western biases he says have undermined cross-national research:

[E]ach country may be considered a laboratory for press performance, as we evaluate the conditions that contribute to enhancing professional autonomy and good journalism.⁶⁶⁷

However, “good” journalism is a normative concept when applied to the global stage. Reese fails to overtly take into account the impact of societal culture, ethnicity, religion and related factors on journalistic ideology; though one could argue it is implicit in the catch-all term “attitudes.” He mentions culture parenthetically, but never acknowledges that an essential divergence in worldviews – shaped by culture, religion, family, politics and a host of other factors – may also have a fundamental impact on the journalist’s professional ideology. Barbie Zelizer is among those who has noted the importance of factoring in culture to analyze a journalist’s “own sense of self” and what is important to him/her.⁶⁶⁸

For that, we turn to back to Thomas Hanitzsch. Building on his work in Indonesia and drawing heavily on Shoemaker and Reese, Hanitzsch produced a framework for mapping the culture of journalism in “diverse cultural contexts” by approaching the field through the prism of cross-cultural research, which studies ideas, practices and artifacts. In this case, that refers to the values, attitudes and beliefs of journalists, their methods of production and the product of that process. “Journalism culture becomes manifest in the

way journalist think and act; it can be defined as a particular set of ideas and practices by which journalists, consciously or unconsciously, legitimate their role in society and render their work meaningful for themselves and others," according to Hanitzsch.⁶⁶⁹

In the process of producing news, he sees journalism culture manifest at three levels:

- The cognitive, which is the "foundational structure" upon which the perception and interpretation of news and news work takes place;
- The evaluative, which drive the "professional worldviews" or role perceptions of journalists, and the "occupational ideologies" of journalism, such as objectivity and investigation; and,
- The performance level, the largely "unconscious structures" such as reporting methods and news formats, that make up the professional practices of journalists.

Hanitzsch distinguishes between the terms "ideology" and "culture" in his observations about how journalists operate. He equates ideologies with the professional practices and values that Deuze has called the "cultural cement"⁶⁷⁰ of journalism. But, he insists

[j]ournalism culture is more than ideology; it is the arena in which diverse professional ideologies struggle over the dominant interpretation of journalism's social function and identity.⁶⁷¹

He proposes a multidimensional taxonomy that, similar to Shoemaker and Reese, divides the (1) "institutional" roles of the profession, which are built around the prevailing culture of the newsroom in which the journalist operates; (2) the "epistemologies" or beliefs of the journalists on issues such as objectivity; and (3) the "ethical ideologies" of the journalist, most specifically the "moral values" that "are inevitably culture-bound." The approach ultimately yields a seven-dimensional structure for analyzing the constituents that produce the worldview of the journalist, no matter where s/he operates:

Although the various dimensions of journalism culture do more or less surface in all nations and media organizations, the relative importance of

these dimensions is likely to vary [revealing] a universe of diverse and coexisting worlds of journalism.⁶⁷²

11) MODELS FOR A 'GLOBAL JOURNALISM ETHIC'

There has been much written in recent years about the emergence of a "global ethic" of journalism. Many of these articles are produced by Western academics safely ensconced in the ivory towers of North America and Europe and are peppered with unyielding dictates: Journalists "should" do this, they "must" do that, they are "required" to act in a certain way. Such prescriptions for a "new" journalism are thick with "paradigms," "hierarchies" and "models," often drenched in a sauce of cultural imperialism.⁶⁷³ Sidney Callahan, for example, would seem to believe that journalists operate in a world of moral absolutes:

"The universality of ethical standards of journalism exists because ethics and morality are a universal human enterprise based on the discovery of universal moral truths by human beings with a common human nature always and everywhere. ... The human family is one. Evolutionary psychologists assure us of "the psychic unity" of human beings who share pan-species characteristics. ... There can be many versions of the golden rule in different religions and in different philosophical systems of morality."⁶⁷⁴

A few go so far as to envision a media Utopia in which the borderless footprint of television is populated by a new breed of borderless journalists who report not through the prism of their own cultural worldview, but rather affect a "cosmopolitan attitude."⁶⁷⁵ Stephen Ward sketches out a set of three "imperatives," to wit: "...to act as a global agent, to serve world citizens, and to enhance nonparochial understandings."⁶⁷⁶

Roberto Herrscher would impose a Universal Code that includes a provision to "deal with the treatment of ethnic groups, sexes, minorities, religious and sexual persuasions, and other groups" because "[f]or the journalist, all people are equal." "The easiest experiment," he writes, is to see if an article about a woman, an Indian, a gay man, or a Muslim would be written in the same way if it dealt with a White, Protestant, straight man."⁶⁷⁷ "Easy," in the West perhaps, but not in a Muslim society where the story about the woman, by dint of

culture and mores, would likely *not* take the same tone,⁶⁷⁸ and the article about the gay would probably not be written at all.⁶⁷⁹

“A global ethics is a bulwark against undue influence of parochial values and social pressures on journalism,” according to Ward.⁶⁸⁰ But Saleh el-Saybehmi, political columnist of *Khaleej Times* in the United Arab Emirates told researchers Shakuntala Rao and Seow Ting Lee, “A discussion of media ethics is useless here where every bit of news is tightly controlled. The mere discussion of ethics implies the existence of some degree of freedom to make choices. We don’t have that.”⁶⁸¹ Added an editor on the *Gulf News* who did not want his name used:

And what use would such a code be to me? The broadcasting code we have says we cannot criticize even the seventh cousin of the Sheikh ... If the code includes ‘tell the truth’ and if we are to tell the truth, we will be put to death.⁶⁸²

The reporters with whom the researchers spoke expressed suspicion that there was some tie between the search for a global ethic and 9/11 and that they would be required to “sit and cry” about American dead when “there is no one to cry” about Arabs who are killed, “especially in the American media.”⁶⁸³ The researchers reported:

These journalists were generally concerned that any discussion on global media ethics would be dominated by Western interests and particularly by the interests of American media to promote a certain viewpoint. ... The postcolonial suspicion among journalists is a complicated mix of negative reactions toward Western interests who have historically “told us what to do” and governments of their own nations who have made frequent attempts to sabotage free exchange of information.⁶⁸⁴

“American communication scholars of press-government relations begin most of their studies with a basic premise, that Western-style libertarian press theory is what the rest of the world should accept,” according to Merrill. Such a viewpoint, he continues, is “not only an arrogant and ethnocentric one but also betrays a stultifying view of reality.”

Cultures are different. The values that shore up such cultures are different. Citizen expectations are different. ... [Yet] [t]he communication scholar or researcher is largely defined by ethnocentric forces that push away conflicting assumptions and articulate even basic hypotheses in the familiar and confining ethnocentric formulations.⁶⁸⁵

As noted above, much of Western media theory is based on the assumption that political "freedom" is a requirement for journalism to be practiced. Of course, to date that "freedom" and what constitutes "journalism" have largely been defined by the West. Most existing trans-national codes of ethics, such as those of ASEAN, the Arab Federation of Journalists, the Islamic Media Charter and the International Principles of Professional Ethics in Journalism, do not even mention freedom of expression, "probably because it is hard to find a consensus on freedom issues among organizations with varying political backgrounds," according to Hafez.⁶⁸⁶

The very issue of the corrupting influence of Western-style media "freedom" has helped alienate many living in the broad sweep of the Muslim world, producing what Pakistani scholar Akbar Ahmed calls "the restless generation" now coming of age in Muslim societies:

It has grown up with the media and feels familiar with American culture. It is ambiguous about what it sees: it cannot live by the American standards it observes, yet paradoxically, it wants them. It also feels contempt for much of what it sees on television (particularly sex and violence) and believes it to be representative of American society. Frustrated, it finds its only legitimate sense of identity in its own traditional civilization, which is Islam. This generation therefore emphasizes its Islamic identity by rejecting the West.⁶⁸⁷

The impact of television violence and explicit sexual content, the negative health consequences and psychological impact of advertising, the triumph of sensationalism and infotainment over serious news, the way in which media jingoism has paved the way to war and a host of other media effects have been extensively documented in the scholarly literature and mainstream media around the world.⁶⁸⁸ Akbar Ahmed of Cambridge calls this

the “demon” media, in reference to Jean Baudrillard’s *The Evil of Images*; “The media have aspects of a demon because they’re almost like a demon lover: you’re seduced by them, can’t get away from them.” In the process, he says, “all the traditional values,” including “the most central unit in Muslim societies,” the family itself, are being undermined by “the box ... in the corner.”⁶⁸⁹

Yet the assumption that American journalism trumps all other models remains at the foundation of much of the scholarship on international journalism. In response to Rao and Lee’s questions about the efficacy of a global journalism ethic, the journalists they spoke with proposed their own set of “universal” ethics: Respect Others, Tolerance for Religious and Cultural Diversity, Freedom and Independence, and Tell the Truth with Restraint.⁶⁹⁰ That last item alone, “truth *with restraint*,” reflects the yawning gap in self-perception that exists between US reporters and their colleagues in other parts of the world. Such a disconnect should be no great surprise. Cultural psychologists tell us that the “influence of values and of economic prosperity imply that a number of Western political axioms cannot be applied to non-Western countries and are not very helpful as global guidelines.”⁶⁹¹

Citing Rao and Lee, South African scholar Herman Wasserman goes a step further, in proposing a postcolonial revision of existing media theories “to renegotiate the orthodox media ethical frameworks inherited from Western societies and contextualize it within the current historical, (geo)political and cultural junction” of the developing world.⁶⁹² Under Wasserman’s framework:

1. The media’s “watchdog” role would be focused not only on government but also on “the effects of globalization and the configuration of geo-political power;
2. Western frameworks for ethical conduct of the media would be “hybridized” with local cultural value systems, recognizing “the fluid notion of identity” in “newly dominant” postcolonial identity discourses, with media textbooks being written from the point of view of those “on the margins of power” and media institutions providing “a space from where the subaltern can speak;” and,
3. Normative media theories would be adjusted to “rectify the blind spot” toward the impact of economic power on the state and the media itself.

Around the world, media scholars are grappling with new models that take economic, political, social, cultural, religious and a variety of other factors into account when evaluating what Westerners often perceive as “imperfections” in the media, while responsible journalists, consciously or not, seek ways to integrate their own unique perspectives – and the realities of the world in which they live – into the normative values Western journalists have long held up as the Holy Grail.

Reporting on developments in the former Soviet bloc, deBeer and Merrill observed that those countries have shaken off the trappings of the old system and “have edged toward a new but uncertain kind of journalism.”⁶⁹³ It is a comment that is equally applicable to the Arab world, a region in the midst of violent upheaval and systematic change.

CHAPTER VI: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK – A SUMMARY

Urgent questions remain unanswered ... their address rests in the spaces between disciplinary frames and the interpretive communities that embody them.

BARBIE ZELIZER

GOING BEYOND DISCIPLINARY BOUNDARIES⁶⁹⁴

As noted in the introduction, this dissertation is, by definition, interdisciplinary. It approaches the study of Arab Muslim journalists from the direction of Islamic studies, but must accommodate a variety of factors touching on multiple disciplines, including Islamic studies, international relations and media studies.

Therefore, to reiterate the point made in the preceding chapters, I am adopting a multidisciplinary framework that includes the following:

1. Benedict Anderson's "imagined communities" theory of nationalism, which offers a system and vocabulary for understanding the role of communications in shaping "nations" in all senses of the word;
2. The theory of post-Islamism, specifically as elaborated by Peter Mandaville, a structure that provides insight into the evolution of Muslim politics and the "overlapping consensus" between Arab Islamists and those of other political persuasions; and,
3. The "hierarchy-of-influences" model of Shoemaker and Reese, supported by Hanitzsch's multidimensional structure of journalism culture. Together, these provide a context for examining and understanding the manifold influences that are shaping attitudes among journalists in the Arab world.

While not every element of these theories necessarily applies to the Middle East of the twenty-first century, they together provide us with a framework for understanding the forces at work among Arab journalists, as reflected in their responses to the survey at the core of this work.

SECTION TWO: ARAB MEDIA

CHAPTER VII: EVOLUTION OF THE ARAB MEDIA

"As long as you don't write about the king, the military, religion or sex you can cover anything you want."

SAMEH AL MAHARIQ, JORDANIAN JOURNALIST⁶⁹⁵

1) JOURNALISM UNDER SIEGE

The Arab media is deep in the throes of change. It is a complex and often painful process, driven by regional rivalries, steeped in domestic political intrigue, and too often marred by physical violence.

"Anyone who tells you they are not scared silly is lying," retired *An-Nahar* publisher Ghassan Tueni, the living symbol of Lebanese media independence, said in the autumn of 2005 as we sat in his office overlooking Beirut's port and newly reborn downtown.⁶⁹⁶ Lebanon – and its media – had been experiencing a renaissance after decades of internecine violence during which most of the country's polarized media outlets were willing weapons of civil war. Now media was once more on the firing line, this time in a confrontation over Syrian influence in Lebanon.

As we spoke, a leading Lebanese television anchor, Mai Chidiac, lay fighting for her life after an assassination attempt, and in the *An-Nahar* newsroom down the hall stood a silent memorial to one of the paper's columnists, Samir Kassir, blown up when he turned the ignition key of his car a few months before. "We built this glass tower as a symbol of the new Lebanon," Tueni said. "Now it has become a fortress under siege. I'm waiting for someone on one of those ships out there to fire a rocket through my window." Two months later, his son, *An-Nahar* publisher Gibran Tueni, was dead; his armored sports utility vehicle torn apart by a remote-controlled car bomb. The assassins struck less than 24 hours after the heir to the journalistic dynasty had returned from Paris, where he had been in self-exile after being warned he was at the top of a hit list. The Tueni assassination sent a chill through the Lebanese media, but for journalists there, fear was nothing new. "For years we had this paranoia for us journalists," said Tania Mehanna, a reporter at the privately-owned Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation (LBC). "Every time you get into your car before you

turn the key you think it is the last time. Then you have another kind of pressure, which is the phone call which you get from the politician or from some kind of faction where they want to stop what you filmed during the day or they put pressure on the TV station not to run the story.”⁶⁹⁷ “I do not say anything related to politics, hate politics,” explained Hadia Sirrow, a reporter for the newspaper *Al-Mustaqbal*. “But you feel that you are involved too. So we’re in this house and we are scared.”⁶⁹⁸

Media has always been a tool of power, nowhere more so than the Arab world, a region in which every country but three – Kuwait, Lebanon and Egypt – were ranked as “not free” on the 2008 Freedom House press freedom survey.⁶⁹⁹ “There’s much to demonstrate in the last six or seven decades that media were accomplices in the general political cover-up of the truth,” according to Lebanese Information Minister Michel Samaha.⁷⁰⁰ And as Jamil Mroue, publisher of Beirut’s *Daily Star* told a Dubai gathering in late 2005, the media continued to serve as “tools” of political structures in which “control is the name of the game.”⁷⁰¹ “The Arab media is still very much state-owned and state-controlled,” agreed Anwar Gargash, a political science professor at United Arab Emirates University. “The way forward is to break the chains of the media.”⁷⁰²

As the levers of media control, and thus the power to shape perceptions, slowly—very slowly—began to shift away from governments at the dawn of the twenty-first century, Arab journalists were being buffeted by an array of competing forces – some lethal – as they attempted to redefine themselves and their profession. “*Profession*” That word alone epitomized the sea-change underway in a region where reporters had too often served as apologists for dictators and autocrats or sold their souls for an envelope of cash. Most Arab journalists remained subject to pressures that ranged from subtle political ‘guidance’ to threats of imprisonment and death, as the assassinations and attempted assassinations of journalists in Lebanon so vividly demonstrated. Yet in newsrooms across the Arab world, journalists were exhibiting a newfound sense of professional purpose.

This writer is part of a generation of American reporters who flocked to journalism schools in the early 1970s. Vietnam and Watergate had inspired us to believe we could change the world. That same sense of excitement could be found among aspiring young Arab reporters – the journalistic children of the Al-Jazeera generation. “I can’t criticize from

within my country,” wrote one of my journalism students at The American University in Cairo, explaining why she wanted to report for the Arab satellite channels, “but journalism allows me to criticize from *outside* and begin to make things different.” Even many of the elders of Arab journalism had a new view of themselves and their mission. “We can’t say the government changed the media, *we* changed the media,” said Hassan Amr, a long-time reporter for Egypt’s official press who helped found an independent newspaper called *Al-Fajr (The Dawn)* to signify that a new day has arrived. “We face pressures but enjoy a lot of freedom now. Even in the [government-controlled] national newspapers, there is a lot of change taking place.”⁷⁰³ It is “an exciting and disgusting” time to be a journalist, LBC anchor Tania Mehanna told me.⁷⁰⁴

Everywhere the rules were in flux; everywhere reporters struggled to maintain their equilibrium on the constantly shifting sands. In Egypt, where media regulations adopted in 1995 were referred to by journalists as the “Press Assassination Law,”⁷⁰⁵ the 2005 election campaigns brought a slight loosening of the reins on media, but in its wake, scores of journalists—including women—were attacked, beaten, threatened or jailed. “Egyptian journalism,” says Osama al-Ghazli Harb, chief editor of *Al-Siyasah Al-Dawliyah*, “is developing on a tortured journey due to political manipulation.”⁷⁰⁶ In Iraq, the deadliest place in the world for reporters and home to scores of new media outlets, journalists were being killed *for being perceived as too close to the government, too close to the resistance or too close to particular political parties*. “Sometimes they target journalists just to scare journalists in general,” according to Al-Arabiya Executive Editor Nabil Khatib. Militant groups ran their own pseudo-news agencies and one motive for the attacks was to make it impossible for other news organizations to operate. “They are supplying the media [with information and footage] and they pressure you in a way to impose their agenda on you,” Khatib explained. “Of course we refuse, because we do not want to be used by any party whoever it is – so we pay the price.”⁷⁰⁷ The tactics were effective. By the spring of 2007, Al-Arabiya had lost 11 staffers to Iraq’s violence, several in targeted assassinations, and was left relying largely on local freelancers. “You feel that you are covering the war as if through glass,” said Khatib.

In less violent locales, the risks were different, but still very real. Saudi Arabia's *Al-Watan* went through four editors in three years as news executives tried to interpret conflicting signals from within the House of Saud, even as the number of journalists detained in the Kingdom continued to climb. That wasn't the only consequence of straying from the party line. For example, a religious court ordered journalist Mansour Nogaidan of the daily *Al-Riaydh*, to receive 75 lashes for "calling for freedom of speech and criticizing Wahabism," Saudi Arabia's strict interpretation of Islam. He refused to report to the police for his punishment.⁷⁰⁸ And across the region, many journalists were paying the *ultimate price*. In all, at least 72 Arab journalists were killed between 2001 and 2007, only some of them in the conflicts in Iraq and Palestine. Examples included Algerian newscaster Murad Belqasem, 43, stabbed in his apartment; Kuwaiti writer Hidaya Salem, 65, shot to death parking her car; 29-year old Libyan writer Deif Al-Ghazal, who had his fingers cut off and was stabbed multiple times in various parts of his body before he was shot dead; Sudanese writer Mohammad Taha, 50, tortured and killed for writings that were considered offensive to the system and the community; and Palestinian Khalil Ziben, 59, known for his controversial writings over the Palestinian internal situation, who was killed as he was about to get in his car early one morning.⁷⁰⁹

In May 2007, I received the following email from Palestinian journalist and student Mohammed Omer, who was born and raised in a refugee camp outside the border town of Rafah in Gaza, from where he continued to report:

I'm scared, i was almost killed or at least bleeding till death. three militants were closing all roads and they sudden, they said to me stop during the curfew, i stop and then the masked-men open fire under my feet hitting the ground under my feet. i thought I'm killed, and i could not explain or scream as the shooting was louder than my scream, so I said: "No, don't do that, stop stop, please" oh, i was in tears, this is the first time I'm begging someone not to kill me, and then the other guy who's also militant was standing in my side and said, we don't want to kill him, lets shoot him in his legs and leave him bleed. I said, what? why? and then he said, your ID, I show it with the press card and then they let me go. I was scared that they would shoot at me once I

turn my back, but alhamdillah this didn't happen, I was scared, scared, scared to death. this was not pleasant experience, and they were doing this, as I got stuck and could not find transport back home, so I went walking in the streets. I'm scared to death. those are just evil and terrible people. I don't wish to be in that position again. i can't stand in my feet anymore, I feel pain and scared. those [gunmen] are working for preventive security, which is working closely with Israelis. I was wearing my bullet proof vest, but this didn't protect me enough. today, more than 10 were killed and tens were injured, many by Israelis, but still some by Palestinian clashes between Hamas and Fateh. they don't want this to be reported. I didn't tell about this to my mother, she will be scared again!

sad greetings!

Mohammed⁷¹⁰

In September 2008, this email arrived:

Dear Lawrence,

sorry for not being able to keep in touch lately, but it's due to mistreatment and torture that I had to go through.

Mohammed⁷¹¹

"I am not exaggerating when I say the Arab press is witnessing one of the worst periods of its life," Salaheddine El Hafez, vice editor-in-chief of Egypt's *Al-Ahram* newspaper and secretary general of the Arab Journalists Association, told a press freedom conference in late 2006. "The margins of freedom for the Arab press are severely limited and we have evidence of that in our daily lives."⁷¹² That was the view of a top official of the leading government-controlled newspaper in the Arab world. Imagine then the perspective of those in the so-called "independent press," – *so called* because in most Arab countries, they, too, depended on the government newspapers for printing, distribution and, in some cases, advertising. The result can be seen in Figure VII-1. It shows the front page of *The Daily Star*

Egypt the day after an opposition rally in 2007. Figure VII-2 is a close-up of the anti-government message that was written on the protestor's placard before the paper was sent to the printing plant run by the government-controlled *Al-Ahram*, where the message was whited out, leaving only the empty placard. From there, the paper was distributed by *Al-Ahram's* delivery trucks to the nation's news stands, which are also owned by *Al-Ahram*. "We didn't know [about the censorship] until we saw the [printed] copies; what were we supposed to do, ask that they all be returned to us?" *Daily Star* publisher Mirette Mabrouk ruefully asked later.⁷¹³

FIGURE 1: DAILY STAR EGYPT

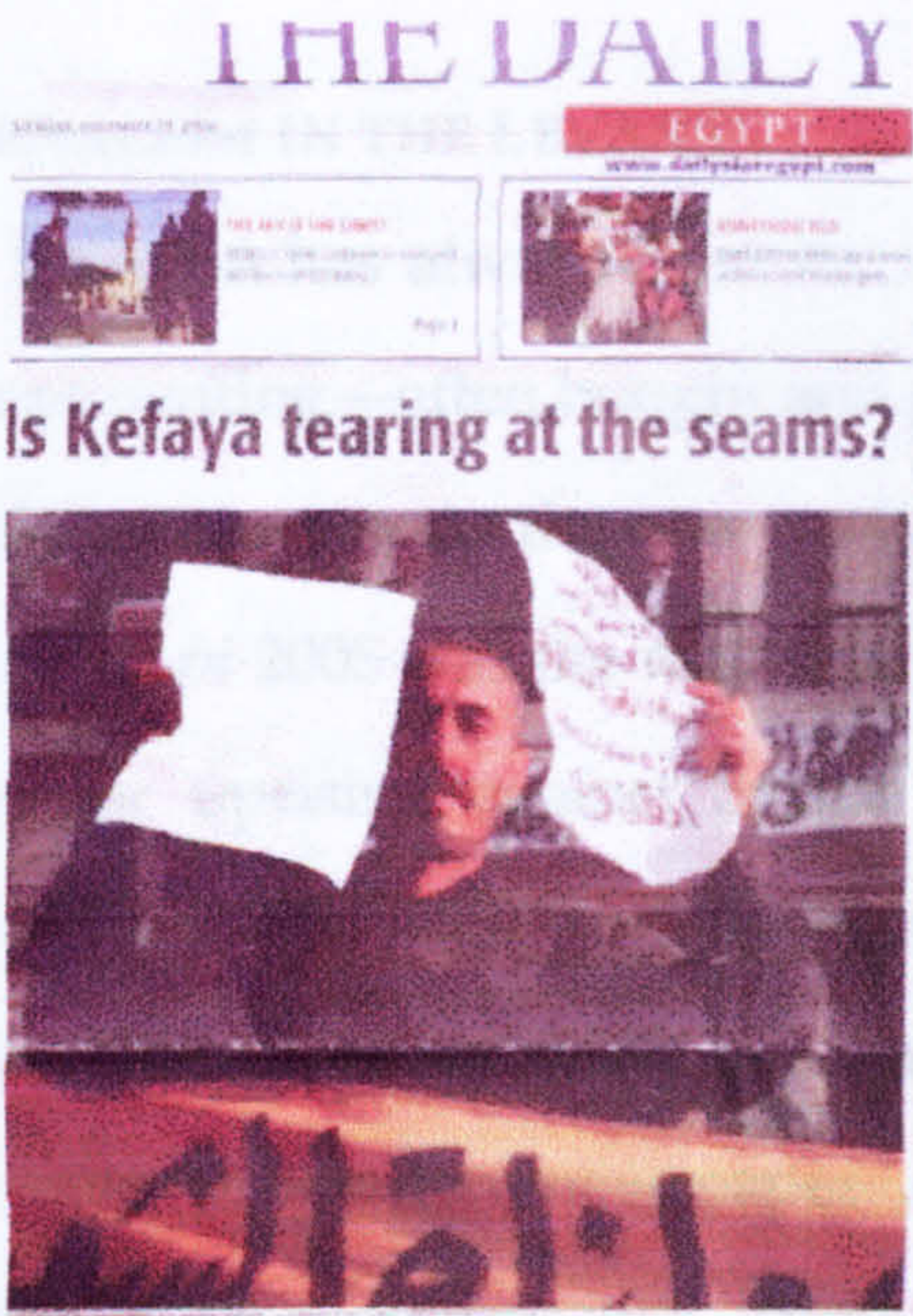


FIGURE 2: ORIGINAL PHOTO



Even the so-called "media free zones" — such as the Media City complexes in Dubai and Cairo – which were supposed to allow news organizations to operate unhampered by local government control, proved to be something less than completely "free". Abdel Bari Atwan, the editor-in-chief of London-based *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, which is a thorn in the side of the Saudi government, says he was refused permission to set up in Dubai's Media City, home to many of the region's pan-Arab satellite channels. His paper was also suffering from an ongoing advertising boycott by the region's advertising agencies, which are largely owned by, or answerable to, the Saudis. It was the same boycott that prevented *Al-Jazeera* from reaching profitability, even though it has the highest news ratings in the Middle East and was regularly ranked as one of the best known brands in the world. "Once we have advertisement in our newspaper, there is a phone call [to the advertiser] from the Saudi

ministry of information. 'Why do you publish advertisement in a hostile newspaper,' [they ask the advertiser]. You have to watch yourself because we could cause problems for your business in our country.' Even on the internet they blocked our site in Saudi Arabia," explained Atwan, who claimed his paper was \$200,000 in debt as a result.⁷¹⁴

It may have been true that, as Al-Jazeera anchor M'Hamed Krichen put it to me, "We no longer have presidents or leaders as prophets" and governments no longer had "the monopoly on truth," but those governments – and the men who led them – still controlled many of the purse-strings, which meant to a large degree, they continued to control the message and the messengers.⁷¹⁵

2) JOURNALISM IN THE LEVANT

Lebanon has always been the region's media Tower of Babel; its highly ideological press representing—often bought and paid for by—a range of Middle East governments and political movements. As the new century dawned, that was still true. What began to change in the spring of 2005 was the way reporters looked at themselves and each other. The media-led popular uprising against Syrian occupation that year produced a shared sense of mission. Journalism itself – briefly – began to emerge as a new ideology. "We feel we can no longer just represent some, we must represent all," I was told by a young reporter with the traditionally pro-Syrian newspaper *As-Safir*, which was reevaluating its own mission following Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon. But life at the hard edge of media independence can be dangerous. Journalist May Chidiac learned that in the fall of 2005 when her left arm and leg were blown off by a bomb placed under the seat of her car. An anchor and talk show host at the privately-owned Lebanese Broadcasting Corporation, she had been an outspoken critic of Syrian involvement in Lebanon. The bombing was seen by journalists as a clear message to all those who dared use the media to attack the Damascus regime.

Driving down the coastal highway from Jounieh to Beirut after a televised media solidarity rally a few days after the attempt on Chidiac's life, anti-Syrian radio talk show host Rima Njeim fielded serial phone calls—one hand on the wheel of her BMW, the other on the phone—as her producer, Johnny el-Saddik, told me of the endless death threats Njeim received from what Lebanese reporters had come to call "the unseen hand." Warned

one email: "We know where your children go to school." Unlike Njeim, many reporters in Lebanon no longer drove their own cars for fear of what might happen when they turned the ignition key. Some were also censoring themselves. "I think my life is more important than any other thing," Caroline Beaini, Beirut correspondent for Abu Dhabi TV, told me later that same day. "Even if I am a journalist, that does not mean that I should die for the cause. The cause is not worth enough to die for."

In a twisted kind of way, the attacks on reporters in Lebanon were a compliment to the growing influence of Arab journalism. In the weeks before his assassination, former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri had been called in by Syrian President Bashar Assad and ordered to either force Beirut-based *An-Nahar*, arguably the most respected mainstream daily in the Arab world, to end its criticism of the Damascus regime or to sell his 20 percent stake in the company.⁷⁶ Hariri opted to sell. "Bashar al Assad could not understand that Hariri could never make us stand with him [Assad]," Ghassan Tueni recalled of the incident. It was not the first time the Syrian leader had tried to force the paper to shift its stance. In one of the small glassed-in offices off the *An-Nahar* newsroom, a Lebanese flag lay draped over the chair of Samir Kassir as a memorial to the outspoken, anti-Syrian columnist whose white Alpha Romeo had exploded in a ball of flames the previous spring. "I still can't believe it," whispered reporter Roula Mouawad as she paused before the glassed-in office. Kassir's likeness was etched on a plaque beside the door, along with the dates: 1960-2005. "We have to fight for them, and the next," Mouawad said later over coffee, referring to her fallen colleagues, "because there *will* be a next." Subsequent events would bear her out.

The attacks also highlighted the degree to which journalism and politics overlap on this new Arab media landscape. Gibran Tueni was a leader of the anti-Syrian bloc in parliament, Chidiac's program was a showcase for anti-Syrian politicians, just as her station, LBC, was a key media voice of the anti-Syrian opposition, and Kassir was a rallying figure within the *Kifaya* (Enough!) movement, which targeted the Syrian presence. In him, fellow columnist Rami Khouri later said, "converged the job of a journalist and someone in the business of political and cultural mobilization."⁷⁷ Meanwhile, across the border in Damascus, journalists like Michael Kilo, who would be jailed by the Assad regime in 2007 for "weakening national sentiment," openly campaigned for a radical overhaul of Syria's

Lebanon policy.⁷¹⁸ None could be said to be “pure” journalists in the strictest modern Western definition. Rather, their profile more closely resembled those of the journalistic change agents of early US history, such as Thomas Paine.

But Lebanon was just one front in a broader war between the press and power in the Middle East as the first decade of the twenty-first century reached its mid-point. Other types of battles were being fought between journalists and the powers-that-be elsewhere across the Arab world. “Arab rulers, regardless of their differences, agree on one thing - all of them consider the Arab press to be their sworn enemy,” according to Jamal Amer, editor-in-chief of *Al-Wasat* in Yemen,⁷¹⁹ where RSF warned of a “climate of violence” which “will inevitably encourage journalists to censor themselves.”⁷²⁰

“Every authoritarian regime has agents everywhere so they can influence our reports. They control the television and the elections process by TV,” said Hassan Amr of Egypt’s *Al-Fajr*. They could also throw offenders in jail, or worse. Journalists who pushed the envelope in this atmosphere tried their best to protect each other. “I secure myself by my documents, my position,” Amr explained, and journalists made sure government officials knew that “there are other people who will scandal them, attack them, if they attack you. You know this kind of blackmail.” But, as countless jailed reporters could attest, such tactics provided only limited protection. Ultimately, Amer conceded, “they can do anything.”⁷²¹

Another example of the tug-of-war between government and media was Jordan, where King Abdallah was trumpeting media reform as a harbinger of greater political reform. However, as elsewhere, media liberalization in Jordan was proving to be a matter of one step forward, one step back, with jailings, muzzlings and “close monitoring” of journalists by the security services a fact of life.⁷²² A panel discussion about media reform organized by the Jordanian government at an international conference in Amman in the fall of 2005 turned into a free-for-all as Jordanian journalists mocked the government’s decision to scrap the ministry of information and repeal a key press law. “You eliminated one law but there are 22 others on the books that can send us to prison,” one reporter shouted at then Deputy Prime Minister Marwan Muasher.⁷²³ Eighteen months later, Jordan’s parliament passed a new press and publications law that included jail terms for any journalist who “insult[s] religious sentiments and beliefs” or “slanders or libels” any individual.⁷²⁴

"Government and security interference have dwindled on the surface ... but prior censorship remains like a phantom that controls the media scene," the Center for Defending Freedom of Journalists (CDFJ) said in its 2006 report on Jordan. "Despite government promises to support the freedom of media, [it] moved in the opposite direction."⁷²⁵ At about the same time the report was published, Jordanian authorities seized all videotapes of an Al-Jazeera interview with the king's uncle, Prince Hassan bin Talal. An Arab journalist with close ties to the Jordanian palace told me state security had been monitoring the interview via bugs planted in Prince Hassan's office, then raced to the airport to intercept the Al-Jazeera team. The Al-Jazeera reporter, Ghassan Ben Jeddou, said Jordanian officials told him that the tapes were seized because the prince's comment "could affect Jordan's diplomatic relations with Saudi Arabia."⁷²⁶

Saudi Arabia was, after all, no fan of Al-Jazeera or a free media. RSF named King Abdallah to its list of "Predators of Press Freedom," along with Libya's Muammar Gaddafi, Syria's Bashar al-Assad, and Tunisia's Zine el-Abdine Ben Ali. While most other Gulf countries were making slow progress on media reform, Saudi Arabia remained near the bottom of the list because of what RSF claimed was a total absence of free media. In place of independent news organizations were "only organs that spout government propaganda:"⁷²⁷

The grip of the Saud family and its Wahabi ideology depends on rigid control of news. No laws protect freedom of expression so journalists dare not criticise the regime and self-censorship is the rule.⁷²⁸

In a 2007 interview, Shams Ahsan, national editor of *The Saudi Gazette*, told the Arab Press Network that, "Freedom of the speech does exist and Saudi Arabia is beginning to offer a good environment for journalists" in which once-taboo subjects like human rights and women's rights could be discussed in the media. Ahsan insisted there was no censorship as such, but, he acknowledged, "There are certain issues we cannot write about. We do not write anything against Islam and we do not attack members of the royal family. We know our limits and in a way practice self-censorship. There have been troubles when red lines have been crossed."⁷²⁹ One example: London-based *Al-Hayat*, the largest circulation daily in the Arab world found itself in the strange situation of being banned in Saudi Arabia in September 2007 when it reported on links between certain Wahabi clerics and a Saudi

extremist who was a key player in Al-Qaeda in Iraq. The paper was owned by Prince Khaled bin Sultan, the son of the Saudi crown prince, demonstrating that no news organization was immune.⁷³⁰

For the Saudi press, the “red lines” around forbidden stories extended well beyond the country’s borders. Criticism of Saudi and allied Arab leaders was *verboden*, but so too were stories that put other Islamic countries in a bad light. Former *Arab News* columnist Fawaz Turki claimed he was fired after writing about alleged massacres carried out the Indonesian army in East Timor. “You don’t write about atrocities committed by an Islamic government – even when they’re already documented in the history books – and hope to get away with it,” he said in an article in *The Washington Post*.⁷³¹ Journalist Mona Eltahawy had a similar experience. The US-based Egyptian was a regular columnist for the pan-Arab daily *Asharq Al-Awsat*, owned by the same Saudi publishing company as *Arab News*. Generally in the Arab world, English-language newspapers are able to be much more critical than their Arabic counterparts because they are inaccessible to the majority of the population. Eltahawy discovered that her criticisms of the Egyptian regime were being published in full on the paper’s English language website, targeted to Western readers, but softened considerably in the Arabic-language newspaper. This passage, for example, appeared in the English version of her article about the Egyptian elections, but was missing from the Arabic version:

When women huddle in a corner out of fear of these same security forces, we have to ask are we in Egypt or in Iraq, from where Arab media daily beam pictures of Iraqi women huddling in fear and anguish from American soldiers?

When thugs (more often than not hired by the government) holding up swords and machetes stand between voters and polling booths, clearly challenging anyone who wants to vote to get past them and their weapons first, what else is there to conclude other than that the Egyptian government is at war with its own people?⁷³²

When Eltahawy complained about the editing, her column was summarily dropped and the editors stopped returning her calls and emails. "The major red lines at *Asharq Al-Awsat* could be quite simple - in descending order they were the Saudi royal family, Saudi Arabia's allies in the Gulf (Qatar, a rival, was considered fair game) and then Saudi Arabia's other Arab allies," she wrote later of the incident. "Within such a hierarchy of red lines, the Egyptian regime can indeed pull rank and demand that *Asharq Al-Awsat* silence a critic."⁷³³ She recalls receiving some advice from a friendly editor when she started writing for *Asharq Al-Awsat*: "He said not mention any leader by name and do not say 'the president.' Say 'Arab government,' [he told me] and that usually passes [the censor]." The paper was also sensitive about stories touching on the ruling Assad family of Syria, due to ties of marriage between the Assad family and the House of Saud.⁷³⁴ But religion remained the most sensitive issue. For example, *Shams*, a pioneering newspaper aimed at young people and launched in 2005 lasted three weeks before it was temporarily shut down after reproducing one of the controversial cartoons of the Prophet Muhammad, first published in Europe.⁷³⁵

Elsewhere in the Gulf, the media was operating under strictures less visceral, but equally real. "What kind of pressures do you face?" I asked the editor of one Gulf paper after chatting about the attacks on Lebanese journalists. "None," he replied. "We don't report about political issues."⁷³⁶ Complained another senior Gulf editor: "Our press is infected with the self-censorship virus."⁷³⁷ One Egyptian journalist who had spent years working for newspapers in the Emirates told me he asked himself "two or three times what will be the reaction" before filing a story. "We have our own personal censorship." He had good reason to be cautious; three times he had been dragged into court. "This is a way to try to make me more polite as a small child has to be a polite," said the reporter, who asked that his name not be used. "It was a very simple local news story. What if I wrote about some politics, or some political problems or what if I give some ideas about terrorism or about military or about security, the matters that really put journalists in serious cases?"⁷³⁸ The pressure did not come from governments alone. Othman Mahmoud al-Sini, editor-in-chief of the Saudi daily *Al-Watan*, said Saudi journalists were "in the cross-fire" as they tried to push the boundaries. "Our difficulties are not from the government. The censorship is not like before. It is not strict, because if it were strict all audience will go to the TV or Internet websites. The margin is wider, but not that wide. It is like a pipe. Our difficulties are from

the society. Some people, because they are against changes, they are very strict or conservative, so we must we fight the pressure, we fight sometimes the attacks from the society.”⁷³⁹

There was contradiction wherever you turned. Bahrain issued licenses for its first private television and radio stations, Egypt pointed to the media as evidence of political liberalization, and Tunisia hosted the 2005 World Summit on the Information Society (which RSF called “a farce”),⁷⁴⁰ but despite those seeming positive signs, the Arab Network for Human Rights Information accused all three of “implicating opposition, activists, and journalists in cases, detaining them and imprisoning them, and physically attacking them, passing through coercive disappearance and ending with the most degrading violations, such as framing criminal cases against those opposition forces, attempting to defame their reputations and spreading fear amongst citizens to prevent them from participating in public affairs.”⁷⁴¹ As a sign of just how bad things were in the region, and how disconnected government rhetoric was from reality, the 2005 UNDP *Arab Human Development Report* listed Egypt and Tunisia among just five Arab states that “assure” the right of journalists “to obtain information and news legally.” Yet, it continued, “in some Arab countries,” including Egypt, “the state of emergency [which curtailed press freedoms] has become permanent and ongoing, with none of the dangers to warrant it.”⁷⁴² RSF ranked Tunisia and Egypt in the bottom 20 on its 2005 World Press Freedom Index,⁷⁴³ and Freedom House singled out Tunisia – along with Libya, Syria and the Occupied Territories – as “of particular concern.”⁷⁴⁴ A year later, Egypt had clawed its way up to 133 of 168 countries on the RSF list⁷⁴⁵ as a result of a slight easing of controls during the 2005 elections, but a subsequent clamp-down made that seeming progress illusory, leading the Committee to Protect Journalists to name the country to its 2007 “Backsliders” list of 10 countries where press freedoms had most deteriorated.⁷⁴⁶

Meanwhile, RSF called Iraq the “graveyard of freedom” for journalists, with more than 175 reporters, camerapersons and other media workers killed in the five years since the US invasion,⁷⁴⁷ many in targeted assassinations, such as that of Atwar Bahjat, a courageous female correspondent for Al-Arabiya (previously a reporter at Al-Jazeera), who, along with her cameraman, was executed in cold blood on the side of a road as she tried to cover the

aftermath of a massive bomb that destroyed one of the holiest Shiites shrines, killing 130 Iraqis. Violence was the greatest danger to reporters, but the country's "democratic" government⁷⁴⁸ posed another kind of threat, waging a systematic campaign against independent media. The government expelled Al-Jazeera (which had also, at various times, been banned from operating in 17 other countries,⁷⁴⁹ including Tunisia, which closed down the Qatar embassy in late 2006 in response to Al-Jazeera's reporting);⁷⁵⁰ temporarily shut down the Baghdad bureau of the other main Arabic satellite news channel, Al-Arabiya, charging its correspondents with inciting "sectarianism" and "violence;"⁷⁵¹ shuttered numerous other media outlets; barred reporters from covering parliament;⁷⁵² and even issued an order banning journalists from the scene of bombings.⁷⁵³

The contradiction between the Iraqi government's professions of "democracy" and its approach to media freedom was the kind of incongruity apparent across the region. While some Arab heads of state, including Egypt's Mubarak, spoke against the jailing of journalists, the Arab Press Freedom Watch said at the end of 2004, "Sadly none of their words have become deeds."⁷⁵⁴ The situation was little different two years later, when the Cairo Institute for Human Rights reported that monitoring of news organizations during elections in Egypt, Tunisia, Lebanon and Palestine found that, "Subordination of media to politicians more than to professional standards was a problem observed in all four countries."⁷⁵⁵ Even where a modicum of progress was being made, there was no assurance it would last. Gamal Hasanain, a cartoonist for one of Egypt's aggressive opposition dailies, learned that when he published a cartoon mocking the involvement of one of Egypt's opposition political parties in the 2007 legislative elections. His bosses were not amused, since the party he had mocked happened to own the newspaper for which he worked. Hasanain was suspended for a month.⁷⁵⁶

Over in Syria, which had long maintained draconian control over the media, the government allowed the establishment of the first private newspaper and the first private satellite TV station, Al-Sham. But the day that station was scheduled to air its first newscast, the Information Ministry ordered it shut down. The government said it was all a bureaucratic snafu; but others speculated it had something to do with the fact that another channel, run by a businessman close to the president, was also about to launch. Either way,

Al-Sham's owners said the temporary closure cost them millions of dollars. "We [Sham TV] are the pioneer and the sacrificial lamb. It has been difficult but now everyone can follow our lead," the station's director, Mamoun Bouni, told reporters.⁷⁵⁷ Similarly, the launch of Jordan's first private TV station, ATV, was suspended on the eve of launch in the summer of 2007 when the government-run Audio-Video Commission called a halt for what it termed "technical reasons," which observers suspected had more to do with the channel's potential to undercut government-owned Jordan TV than anything to do with technology.⁷⁵⁸

In its first Media Sustainability Index for the Arab world, the international media and civil society NGO IREX measured a market basket of factors that contribute to a sustainable free press and found that only six Arab countries had crossed the Rubicon into the realm of "near sustainability."⁷⁵⁹ But that progress was by no means secure. In its 2007 report, Freedom House reported that even the "modest improvements in press freedom in the Middle East and North Africa over the last several years" had "reversed," leaving the Middle East at the bottom of the world's ranking of press freedom. Said Freedom House Executive Director Jennifer Windsor:

The Middle East and North Africa are home to some of the most repressive governments in the world, and these governments have found a way to limit citizens' natural craving for free expression and unfiltered information. While there have been some changes in the past few years, ultimately we've also seen some real pushback on the part of governments.⁷⁶⁰

Adding to the challenge was the growing suspicion and animosity between religious sects. This was particularly pronounced in Iraq, where membership the "wrong" branch of Islam could – and did – get reporters killed; but it also played out in increased Sunni-Shia tensions across the region, as well in more localized schisms, such as between Muslims and Coptic Christians in Egypt. An impromptu poll of Arab news executives at the 2007 Arab Broadcast Forum found that a majority felt that the current sectarian divisions in the Arab world were making their job more difficult.⁷⁶¹

3) HISTORY OF CONTROL

After its early, pioneering years, Arab journalism “lost its soul,” according to Ghassan Tuani, and “journalists became civil servants.”⁷⁶² Since the end of World War II, government control had been the hallmark of media in Arab countries, where “muzzling and suppression ... manipulation and co-option”⁷⁶³ by regimes that “claimed a monopoly on truth”⁷⁶⁴ became the norm, news organizations were mouthpieces for governments and political movements, and the media was traditionally viewed with suspicion and little respect. Looking at the Middle East in the 1970s, William Rugh, a former US ambassador in the region and expert on the Arab media, divided the Arab print media into three classifications: the “mobilization press,” controlled by revolutionary governments like those in Libya, Syria, Iraq and Sudan; the “loyalist press” of Saudi Arabia, the Gulf and Palestine, which was largely privately-owned but beholden to the government; and the “diverse press” of Lebanon, Kuwait, Morocco, and Yemen, which was relatively free and reflected a diversity of views, but was subject to more subtle pressures.⁷⁶⁵ A fourth category of Arab print media was the offshore pan-Arab press. Up until the early 1970s, Beirut was the media capital of the Arab world. Its rough-and-tumble mix of politics and religion covered the entire spectrum of Arab opinion, from the Arab nationalism and socialism of the Nasserites, Ba’athists and Palestinians to the Saudi-backed monarchists and Islamist sympathizers of the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. All these views were represented in the pages of the country’s lively media. But the same political crosscurrents that fed the debate also fueled the communal violence that would take hold in the early 1970s and tear the country asunder for the next two decades. As documented in this writer’s account of that conflict,⁷⁶⁶ the battles of the Middle East were fought out on the soil of Lebanon. Journalists were among the countless victims. Assassinations of editors, newsroom bombings, kidnappings and threats from the plethora of competing factions, and the governments that sponsored them, silenced the voices of debate. Many newspapers shut down.

Beirut’s loss was London’s gain. The Arab world’s most respected newspaper, *Al-Hayat*, stopped publishing in 1976 after 13 bomb attempts on its offices (its founder had been assassinated in 1966). Eleven years later, it reopened in London, joining the Saudi-owned *Asharq Al-Awsat*, which, since 1977, had been edited in Britain and printed in the Arab world. The Saudi royal family soon bought controlling interest in *Al-Hayat* via Prince Khaled bin Sultan, who would become known in the West as the Saudi military commander during

the first Gulf war, Operation Desert Storm. London was also base for the third of the leading pan-Arab dailies, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* (*Arab Jerusalem*). Reflecting the Arab media's reliance on political sponsors, the Palestinian paper carried few advertisements and received funding directly from various Arab sources.⁷⁶⁷

While it maintained a broadly pro-Saudi line, the opinion pages of *Al-Hayat* were "among the most varied and open fora for debate in the Arab world."⁷⁶⁸ And although the move from Beirut to London took *Al-Hayat* out of the direct line-of-fire of the Lebanese conflict, it did not shield its staff of some 300 journalists from other pressures faced by their colleagues at papers based in the Arab world. In early 1997, the paper's offices in New York, Washington, London and Riyadh were the targets of letter bombs that the then-editor believed were ordered by Egyptian Islamist Ayman Zawahiri. The militant, who would later emerge as Osama bin Laden's right-hand man, was apparently upset that the paper had not run an interview with him, something that would have likely upset Egyptian authorities and could have had repercussions for the paper's distribution there. Militants weren't the only threat. Governments could also reach out and touch the offshore papers. In the spring of 2004, the Beirut bureau chief of *Asharq Al-Awsat* was convicted in absentia (he had fled the country) and sentenced to a year in prison for "disturbing national security and harming the president's dignity" after the paper reported that there had been an assassination attempt on the life of then-President Emil Lahoud.⁷⁶⁹ In a telling commentary on the state of the Arab media, *Al-Hayat* saw fit to note in its article about the conviction that, "Despite occasional pressure from authorities in recent years, the Lebanese press remains one of the Mideast region's freest."⁷⁷⁰

The offshore print media and their counterparts in a few Arab countries may have enjoyed some modicum of leeway, but radio and television remained firmly in government hands. According to Muhammed Ayish, chair of the College of Mass Communication at the University of Sharjah, "the concept of television journalism, as a set of distinctive professional values and practices, was virtually nonexistent in Arab world television."⁷⁷¹ As Rugh told a Senate panel in the spring of 2004,

Most Arab broadcasting laws prohibited criticism of the head of state, defamation of religion, or undermining public order. Additional taboos were

observed by broadcast editors based on local custom and political circumstances. Arab broadcast audiences therefore had access only to news and commentary officially approved by their respective governments, unless they could tune in to the Voice of America, BBC, Radio Monte Carlo or CNN.⁷⁷²

Whatever their classification, Rugh told the senators, “Arab information media have always been closely tied to politics.” While the policy has been used to cloak a variety of other motives – not least, that of keeping authoritarian regimes in power by stifling dissent – the most oft-cited reason for muzzling the media was the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Arab governments have been able to justify explicitly and implicitly their influence over the mass media as necessary either while the country is “at war” with Israel, or politically confronting Israel’s policies. Because of the degree to which the Arab-Israeli dispute has become the central issue in Arab foreign policy and a matter of Arab patriotism, this justification is difficult to oppose.⁷⁷³

Steeped in a culture of perennial confrontation shaped by the conflict with Israel, the patriotic fervor so often seen among reporters in countries at war became a permanent fixture of the Arab media. “Whether the government controlled the media directly or influenced them indirectly,” Rugh reported in an earlier study, “editors were more likely than usual to make an effort to support their government in the national interest during the conflict.”⁷⁷⁴ Many journalists voluntarily subscribed to concept of “responsible freedom,”⁷⁷⁵ in which the interests of the state – and the Arab nation – superseded all other considerations. Those interests could be defined in many ways:

They involve anything that can be considered a threat to the ruling institutions and their interests, including negative statements about religions or beliefs, Arab nationalism and its struggle, values, and national traditions.⁷⁷⁶

Thus, from an early point, Arab journalists were expected to toe the party line, often in a quite literal sense. “The press is an authority whose function is to guide people and actively participate in building their society exactly as does the People’s Assembly,” Egypt’s

Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, then editor of *Al-Ahram*, wrote in 1960 to justify Nasser's nationalization of five major publishing houses.⁷⁷⁷

It had not always been thus. In fact, just a few years earlier the political neutrality for which *Al-Ahram* was then known was perceived by one researcher as "an extremely hopeful sign for the future of Arab journalism."⁷⁷⁸ That observation was made by Thomas McFadden, a former US diplomat in Beirut who carried out a survey of journalists in Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Iraq and Egypt in 1951 and 1952. It was a time of optimism in the profession, a brief period of media liberalization between the end of colonial-era restrictions and the advent of draconian government controls that would arrive with Ba'athism in Syria and Iraq, Nasserism in Egypt and the ascension to the throne of King Hussein in Jordan. McFadden was swept up in the sense of the possible then pervading Arab newsrooms. In the Arab media's coverage of the region's governments he found "more criticism and it is more vehement than is the case normally in most advanced democracies."⁷⁷⁹

Based on responses to questionnaires he distributed in newsrooms, McFadden concluded that "Arab editors believe the role of the press in society should be to fight for political causes. This is much more important, they think, than objectively to inform the Arab public."

He identified five priorities of Arab journalists: (1) To fight against imperialism; (2) to fight against Zionism; (3) to fight for Arab nationalism and Arab unity; (4) to fight against government corruption and weakness; and, (5) to fight for the reform, modernization and democratization of Arab society.⁷⁸⁰

While suffering from a preponderance of opinion over fact and a shortage of resources, McFadden observed that the Arab media business had evolved to a point where many newspapers were no longer dependent on political subsidies and he noted that such a development marked the rise of objectivity in the US media. "It can be predicted confidently that similar developments will occur in Arab journalism," McFadden wrote. "This day appears to be approaching on the Arab scene much more rapidly than anyone would have a right to expect."⁷⁸¹

But that era of relative freedom would end with the wave of revolutions that swept the region a few years later. *Al-Ahram*, in which McFadden had so much hope, would emerge as the ultimate government mouthpiece. Soon, Morocco to Yemen, the press was regarded as a tool of nationalism and politics.⁷⁸² To stray was unpatriotic; firing was the least of the penalties. Dissenting journalists were fined, imprisoned, or, in some cases, executed. Publications were regularly shuttered. As Ibrahim Nawar, head of the Arab Press Freedom Watch (APFW), has observed, "Freedom of expression is not something on offer in the Arab world. It has to be fought for."⁷⁸³ Hoda al-Mutawa, who worked for a time as a presenter on Bahrain television, recalls being summoned by the minister of information and ordered to stop discussing some of the issues she had raised on the air. When she tried to object, the minister waved his hand to silence her, sighed and said, "Hoda, why do you want to make life difficult for yourself? Just say, 'OK' like everyone else." The conversation was over. "They speak to you as a father to a child," she says.⁷⁸⁴

As *Al-Hayat* had discovered, the pressure came not only from governments. According to the London-based APFW's 2001 *State of the Arab Media* report, "Clans in Yemen and Kuwait, criminal gangs in Algeria and Egypt and Islamic fundamentalists in Algeria all took part in the offensive against the freedom of speech [which was] a common denominator in all Arab countries."⁷⁸⁵ That was underlined by the report's list of more than 50 "free speech victims" the previous year, a litany of assassinations, attempted assassinations, imprisonments, interrogations, beatings and fines. The list was accompanied by a compendium of 15 publications in Morocco, Egypt, Yemen, Jordan and Sudan that had been forcibly closed, confiscated or taken to court.⁷⁸⁶ The resulting self-censorship that pervaded the Arab media was exacerbated by the fact that, according to Hussein Amin, chair of the department of journalism at the American University in Cairo, "most Arab authorities do not publish a list of subjects that they do not want to be covered, leaving the reporter in a state of confusion."⁷⁸⁷

The Arab-Israeli conflict may have been the cover, but for many governments, survival was the real issue in attempting to control what their populations saw, heard and read. In May of 2004, as the Bush administration was unveiling its blueprint for democracy in the Middle East and Arab leaders were preparing to gather for a summit to discuss,

among other things, political reform, the APFW held its third annual conference under telling title, "Freeing the Arab Media from State Control." The final communiqué was stark reading for supporters of press freedom, highlighting "the strong linkage between the hostile attitude of the state towards the freedom of expression and the press, and its deep rooted tendencies to resist public pressure for change and democratic reform of Arab societies in response to the wide democratization in the whole world."⁷⁸⁸

Beyond the issue of government control was the existence of a cash culture in which reporters – particularly in the "diverse press" of Lebanon and a handful of other Arab countries – were paid to write certain stories by competing political or business interests. "One of the major problems here is that conflict of interest is not considered to be a problem," Magda Abu Fadil, the director of the Institute for Professional Journalists (IPJ), told an interviewer. "This is a major, major problem. Journalists cannot be credible if they accept money, free trips, gifts and favors."⁷⁸⁹ This same phenomena existed in many non-Arab Muslim countries (as well as elsewhere in the developing world), and was seen in the common practice of companies handing out envelopes of cash at news conferences just to get reporters to show up. The king of Morocco annually hosted a television broadcast on which he ostentatiously handed over government subsidy checks to executives of the major newspapers.

For those members of the economic elite who owned satellite dishes, the only real alternatives to the local media were the news broadcasts of CNN International and the BBC, while less-privileged citizens were left to rely on the shortwave broadcasts of the Arabic service of the BBC World Service, the Voice of America and a few European broadcasters, thus ensuring that Arabs and Muslims saw not only the world, but their own region, through the dominant frame of the Western media. To a large extent, this was even true for those depending on domestic news sources. With few exceptions, the Arab and non-Arab Muslim media was completely dependent on Western news organizations when it came to covering the rest of the world – and their own region. Carefully-vetted wire copy from news agencies like the Associated Press (AP), Reuters and Agence France Press (AFP) provided stories from Washington, Moscow, and Beijing, as well as other Arab capitals, while television viewers saw the world through the prism of the major US networks, CNN, BBC,

and a few other Western television news agencies, such as Reuters Television and Associated Press Television, that supplied the videotape for Arab broadcasts.

This then was the situation when, in the 1990s, Saudi entrepreneurs close to the government set up the first private cross-border Arab satellite television operations. The goal was to counter the influence of the Western broadcasters then beaming signals into the Middle East, as well as smuggled videocassettes of Western programs and movies, which offered the only alternative to government-controlled television. While illegal in many countries, satellite dishes – which had been shrinking in size – began to sprout like desert mushrooms on rooftops across the region in the late 1980s, even as “state broadcasting monopolies and strict government censorship remained the norm in most Arab states and Iran.”⁷⁹⁰ Just how strict, was demonstrated with Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in 1991. Viewers relying on Saudi state television for their news would not even have known war had broken out. The state broadcaster failed to mention the invasion of the neighboring emirate for more than 48 hours. It was the equivalent of a French TV station ignoring a German occupation of Belgium. For those with satellite dishes, all eyes turned to CNN.

Egypt was the first to introduce Arab satellite broadcasting in order to convey its official position during the first Gulf war. But Nilesat was a government-controlled operation, little different from the fare on terrestrial state-run TV. Nine months later, two well-connected Saudi entrepreneurs flipped the switch on the Middle East Broadcasting Center (MBC), ushering in the era of private satellite broadcasting in the Arab world. While MBC was “very serious about Arab news,” according to a consultant who worked with the owners at the time, and brought in a group of “first-class” British and Lebanese news people,⁷⁹¹ coverage of Saudi affairs was handled with kid gloves. MBC was soon joined by the Arab Radio and Television Network (ART) and Orbit, both originally based in Rome, and Lebanon’s LBC International and Future Television. But when it came to news, these new channels were anything but independent operations. One of the two Saudi partners in MBC was King Fahd’s brother-in-law; the other partner later joined with another member of the royal family to found ART. Orbit was controlled by the son of the Saudi crown prince; LBC was founded with the help of another Saudi sheikh; and Future Television was created by Lebanese businessman Rafiq Hariri, who made his fortune in Saudi Arabia and was

related by marriage to the Saudi royals (he would later become the Saudi-backed prime minister of Lebanon, helping that nation recover from 15 years of civil war, before dying in a massive car bomb in 2005).

Critics of Saudi domination of the region's media denounced the "eunuch-like condition" of Arab journalists and other Muslim intellectuals who had sold out to the high salaries. This "media control," observed Abdelwahab el-Affendi, a Sudanese scholar at the University of Westminster's Center for the Study of Democracy, was not confined to the Middle East, but rather

it constitutes a malaise that is most acutely manifested in the Arab heartlands of Islam, but which has gripped the whole Ummah (the World Muslim Community) in its tentacles. The impact of this phenomenon reverberates all over the land of Islam...⁷⁹²

There was then, compelling evidence for el-Affendi's grim portrait of the state of the Muslim media in 1993:

They have managed to force independent voices from the Muslim world using market manipulation, bribery and sheer intimidation ... The result is a blanket dark age extending from Indonesia to the Atlantic with long shadows falling over London, Paris, New York and other centers of Muslim exile. Debate is stifled, publishing is stymied and free thinking all but eliminated in the Muslim world.⁷⁹³

This dominance of the channels of communication by the political and economic elite affected the ways in which information spread in the Arab and non-Arab Muslim world and the very nature of the information itself. Since they worked for organizations seen as government mouthpieces, journalists commanded little respect among the public or within the governments they served. For the most part, investigative reporting was non-existent; challenging official statements or policies was unheard-of. There were no awards for uncovering government malfeasance and few Western-style journalism schools. As Hussein Amin of the American University in Cairo journalism program has written:

The central purpose of mass communication programs in the Arab world is to prepare generation after generation of semi-educated journalists whose job it is to promote the “achievements” of the state.⁷⁹⁴

With media quality suspect, Arabs in particular turned to quantity. It is difficult to convey to those who have not visited the Arab world – especially places like Beirut, Damascus, Amman and Cairo – the degree to which a hunger for information pervades all discussion. Many Arabs skim several newspapers a day as they try to piece together a coherent picture of the news; the radio is always on, switching from one newscast to another. In past decades, the distinctive jingle of Radio Monte Carlo’s Arabic newscast quite literally echoed through the streets. With the advent of satellite TV, the television provided constant background noise in coffeehouses and grocery stores. To a degree seen in the US only during times of national crisis or catastrophe, Arabs are fixated on the events that constantly buffet their turbulent region. In Jordan, for example, 83 percent of people say they watch TV news. That’s more viewers than entertainment programs attract, the exact reverse of the US, where less than 50 percent regularly tune in to television news.⁷⁹⁵

The manner in which the media reflected official thinking, along with the absence of formal training, meant there was little space for Western-style notions of journalistic accuracy and objectivity to take root. Thus even coverage of issues of no consequence to the government was frequently rife with inaccuracies, innuendo and falsehoods – some of them bought-and-paid-for, some the result of sloppy or lazy journalism. Put simply, if a reporter was expected by the government to print articles he or she knew were not true, there was little impediment to adopting a similar approach on other stories. In the West, the journalists who are most respected are those considered paragons of objectivity. Conversely, in the Middle East and other parts of the Muslim world, the most respected journalists are known not for unbiased reporting, but for their opinions. This was based on the logic that while the news stories on the front page could not be trusted, the opinion columns offered insights garnered from the writer’s access to the corridors of power. For example, the Arab world’s best-known journalist, the former editor-in-chief of the Egyptian daily *Al-Ahram*, Mohammed Heikal, was a close friend of Gamal Abdel Nasser at a time when the Egyptian president was seen as the father of Arab nationalism. Heikal’s columns thus offered a

window on the thinking of the region's most powerful leader. "When all is said and done, Mohamed Hassanein Heikal remains a legacy of journalism at its best," *Al-Ahram* opined in 2007, illustrating the degree to which the distinction between opinion and fact continued to blur.⁷⁹⁶

Beyond that was the very basic issue of a woeful lack of training. "Many working journalists lack the basic skills that would enable them to identify the right story, develop story ideas and investigate interesting and informative stories within a complex environment," according to a report prepared for the British Council in Cairo. "Young journalists often lack direction in their places of work and the competitive nature of the job market pressures professionals into conforming as opposed to carving out the space for new skills and innovative coverage."⁷⁹⁷ Nakhle El Hage, the chief editor at the Saudi-owned satellite channel Al-Arabiya, went so far as to say that "500 well-trained Arab journalists would be enough to change the standard of the Arab media."⁷⁹⁸ It was not a new problem. "[W]riting is one of the crafts which help society to live ... now perfection in the crafts is relative ... hence imperfection in writing is due not to a lack of religion or morals but to economic and social causes," the Arab philosopher Ibn Khaldun had written six century before.⁷⁹⁹

Given the local media's lack of credibility and the general suspicion of Western sources, what el-Affendi and others have called "a counter-culture" of "unofficial news channels" emerged, in which rumors and conspiracy theories ran rife. As a result, countless unsubstantiated stories – some worthy of the *National Enquirer* – ricochet through the Middle East every day. For example, riots once broke out in Khartoum after word circulated that foreigners were causing the penises of Sudanese men to disappear by shaking their hands. One victim "felt his penis melt into his body," *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* reported.⁸⁰⁰ Some of the conspiracy theories are, to a Western mind, equally bizarre. During a spate of bombings in Baghdad, *The New Yorker* quoted a local cleric who had heard "John Kerry is behind this so Bush will lose his Presidency and look bad in front of the world."⁸⁰¹ Other rumors are based on long-standing myths, such as the story that the Wahabi sect of Sunni Islam was an invention of the British as part of a divide-and-rule strategy, an idea first suggested during the colonial era in an apocryphal memoir of a British soldier entitled *Confessions of a British*

Spy and repeated by Iraqi Shiites during the US occupation.⁸⁰² An American professor living in Saudi Arabia in the mid-1980s wrote that one was “likely to feel he lives amid a vast rumor, whose centre is nowhere and whose circumference is everywhere.”⁸⁰³ So all-pervasive were the rumors in Iraq during the first year of the US occupation, for example, that Coalition authorities began putting out a newsletter called the *Baghdad Mosquito* to swat away all the ill-founded stories.

Many of these rumors, frequently repeated and given new life in the press, reflect a set of stereotypes about the US that are, in many ways, the mirror image of those that Americans hold about Muslims. As noted by political scientist Mark Tessler, who has carried out several surveys in the Middle East, “some citizens in Arab and Muslim countries embrace stereotypes every bit as disturbing as our own.”⁸⁰⁴ Central to these stereotypes is that of the “crusader-Zionist conspiracy” in which “the Western demon [is] bent on the eradication of Islam.”⁸⁰⁵ Though relatively little scholarly work has been done on portrayals of the US in the media of Arab and Muslim countries, there is substantial anecdotal evidence of bias for anyone who has ever picked up a newspaper in the Muslim world. Writing in an Israeli publication, journalist Adel Darwish argued that anti-Americanism in the Arab language media is “all-encompassing,” and includes selective showing of negative images of the US, selective language, exaggerated headlines, use of rumor and conspiracy theories in the place of facts, selective reporting, and the selective editing of translated articles from the Western media.⁸⁰⁶

In a study of Arab media coverage of the Arab-Israeli wars, William Rugh noted that while there was “less politically-motivated distortion in the Arab media” in 1973 than 1967, a key theme involved US support for “the Zionist entity.”⁸⁰⁷ Likewise, an examination of post-9/11 political cartoons from the Muslim world, revealed a pattern of themes that include the US as “deceptive” and the moral equivalent of bin Laden.⁸⁰⁸

4) ARAB SATELLITE BROADCASTING

With the arrival of Al-Jazeera in 1996, the very nature of Arab journalism began to change. Based in the tiny Gulf emirate of Qatar, the news and information satellite channel was part of the liberalization effort launched by the new British-educated emir, Sheikh Hamad bin Khalifa al-Thani, who had ousted his father in a bloodless coup the previous

year. Without Al-Jazeera, Osama bin Laden might never have achieved the mythic status he would come to enjoy. As the fireside radio chat was President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's "bully pulpit" – the means through which he reached the American people – during World War II, so too did the Qatar-based satellite channel serve as bin Laden's bully pulpit as he launched his military and propaganda assault on the US. Under any circumstances, the bombing of the World Trade Center would have shaken America at its foundations. But, as the roundups of top bin Laden lieutenants and the dismantling of much of al-Qaeda's infrastructure would later demonstrate, the Saudi exile's greatest threat lay not in individual terrorist operations, but in his role as an icon around which the forces of anti-Americanism could rally.

Ironically, given later accusations of bias and unprofessionalism, Al-Jazeera's original news team were almost all veterans of the BBC's Arabic television service, which had just withdrawn from an ill-fated joint venture with Orbit TV when it became clear that the BBC and the Saudi royal family – not surprisingly – had different ideas about what constituted journalism. The Al-Jazeera team was given a \$140 million subsidy by the emir and a mandate: launch an independent television station free from government scrutiny, control, and manipulation. The staff proceeded to do just that. According to author Naomi Sakr, "It soon made up for lost time, astonishing viewers with uncensored political coverage quite different from any Arabic-language television programming previously seen."⁸⁰⁹ The channel's staff saw themselves as agents of democratic change in a region trapped in the grip of autocracies. One official in the Clinton White House called it a "beacon of light,"⁸¹⁰ and Israeli cabinet minister Gideon Ezra told the *Jerusalem Post*: "I wish all Arab media were like Al-Jazeera."⁸¹¹

Not everyone was enamored. "Using the Western style, we have broken many taboos," Ibrahim M. Halal, then Al-Jazeera's chief editor, told *The New York Times*. "Of course, we upset most other Arab countries."⁸¹² To say the least. Arab rulers across the region were shocked by this new, largely unfettered approach that, as Mohammed el-Nawawy and Adel Iskandar note in their book about the channel, was considered "nothing short of heresy."⁸¹³ Virtually every Arab government criticized Al-Jazeera. The Saudis were particularly incensed. Al-Jazeera not only impinged on their near-monopoly of satellite

channels, but the station had the temerity to give voice to those who would question the House of Saud. As one Saudi newspaper wrote:

The poisonous ideas that are conveyed via the Western satellite channels are easy to handle because the viewer knows the thought they are trying to convey in advance. However, when this poisonous thought is conveyed via an Arab satellite channel, it becomes all the more dangerous because it is concealing itself behind our culture.⁸¹⁴

Morocco, Jordan, the Palestinian Authority, Bahrain and Kuwait all closed Al-Jazeera offices, denied its reporters visas or temporarily withdrew their ambassadors from Qatar. Al-Jazeera exhibited a "lack of professionalism and neutrality when dealing with Kuwaiti issues," a senior Kuwaiti official told reporters when that country expelled the channel's reporters for the second time.⁸¹⁵ Egypt boycotted an Arab summit in Qatar because of its anger at Al-Jazeera over interviews with Egyptian Islamists. Even at the height of the US invasion, Saddam Hussein expelled one Al-Jazeera correspondent from Baghdad and banned another from reporting, prompting the influential station to flex its muscles by ordering a complete work stoppage by its Baghdad team, thus denying the Iraqi leader direct access to its 35 million viewers. Across the region, governments and individuals alike were shocked when Al-Jazeera began to interview Israeli officials to hear their side of the Israel-Palestine conflict. Such an approach was in keeping with the station's motto: "Opinion, and other opinion."⁸¹⁶

The impact on the average viewer was profound. Where Arabs once patched together their view of current events through a plethora of news media, Al-Jazeera became the touchstone. As Nadia al-Saqqaf, editor-in-chief of the *Yemen Times* explained, "In Yemen, we hear about what is happening in our country through Al-Jazeera or CNN before it gets reported on the local TV. Sometimes it never does."⁸¹⁷

The age of government monopoly of information and Western media imperialism was coming to an end. For the Arab public, the world would never look the same again. For Arab journalists, the impact was, if anything, even more dramatic.

CHAPTER VIII: SATELLITE TV AND ARAB DEMOCRACY

Al-sihafa [journalism] is an essential tool of democracy ... for it sounds the people's pain and hope in the rulers' ears. ... Freedom is the source of light for al-sihafa and the objective desired by writers and thinkers who know how to employ it and defend it.

RAFIQ AL-MAQDISI

*FANN AL-SIHAFI (THE CRAFT OF JOURNALISM), 1946*⁸¹⁸

1) MEDIATING REVOLUTION

The red and white banners of Lebanon's anti-Syrian protests in the spring of 2005 were a testament to the transformational power of the Arab media revolution. The color scheme was made-for-TV by a team of Lebanese advertising executives who, like the tens of thousands who poured into the streets, were inspired by Ukraine's televised Orange Revolution. Arab television coverage of Lebanon in turn helped propel embryonic pro-democracy movements from Egypt to Bahrain, whose mantra *Kifaya* (Enough!) became a media catchphrase.

Without Al-Jazeera and the new constellation of Arab satellite broadcasters, it is unlikely there would ever have been a "Cedar Revolution," as a Bush Administration official quickly dubbed the spontaneous protests that ended Syria's 29-year military presence in Lebanon.⁸¹⁹ The assassination of popular former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri was the spark that lit the fires of protest, but plenty of other Lebanese politicians had been murdered in the past, often at Syria's hands. Anyone protesting faced a similar fate. What was different this time was that the Arab world was watching. It was an unprecedented event: Arabs standing up to a dictatorial regime. Syria had once wiped out a significant portion of the population in one of its own rebellious cities. But that massacre had taken place far from the probing eyes of the world back in the days when Arab reporters did what they were told. Al-Jazeera had changed the rules of the game. Bashar Assad – who forlornly demanded that TV cameras "zoom out" to show the Beirut crowds weren't as large as reported – recognized that the new media landscape had altered geopolitical realities.

On the surface, Lebanon would seem to bolster the notion that media is the “arsenal for democracy,”⁸²⁰ Yet its impact can easily be overstated. Political scientists like to note that journalists – and those who study them – tend to have an inflated sense of the media’s influence. That’s particularly true when it comes to talk of television and emerging democracies. There is a strong case to be made that the unblinking 24/7 lens of the Arab media provided an electronic safety net to the crowds assembled in Martyr’s Square to demand Syria’s withdrawal; but so, too, did the political cover resulting from Bush administration pressure on Damascus that had – almost coincidentally – been building in preceding months.

Television did not drive out the Syrians, any more than it gave birth to some new form of Lebanese democracy. A complex confluence of events – mediated by television – produced the withdrawal. And freed of the Syrian presence, Lebanon quickly settled back into political gridlock built on an outdated power-sharing arrangement that had not substantially changed in more than half a century, then once more descended into violence in the summer of 2006. As for a democratic “domino effect” among all those countries watching the Lebanon protests on television, two years later, not one of the Middle East’s entrenched regimes had changed.

TV cannot alone *create* change. It is an *agent* of change – more specifically, a tool used by the architects of change. There is a broad and deep literature documenting the fact that, even in the US, where journalists see their mission as that of defending democracy,⁸²¹ the media rarely leads public opinion, but instead reflects it.⁸²² “The error,” wrote J. Herbert Altschull in his seminal work on the power of the media, “is to fail to recognize that *the news media are agencies of someone else’s power.*”⁸²³ Political scientists maintain that this is particularly true in the period before democracies take root. This argument can be found as far back as the now-dated *Four Theories of the Press*, which argued that media is *shaped by*, rather than *shape*, social and political structures.⁸²⁴ Those theories were developed in an age of Cold War confrontation; its authors were writing from a worldview that saw a geopolitical landscape in which democracy was pitted against totalitarianism. Perhaps most importantly, in the context of a discussion of media and democracy, the “footprint” of the television signal in those days largely followed national boundaries. The arrival of trans-

border television, particularly in a part of the world where governments always controlled the airwaves, introduced a huge new variable into the equation. As Naomi Sakr as pointed out, “people gain a different sense of their own potential when they can use electronic media to overcome restrictions on social interaction that are imposed by physical space.”⁸²⁵ Yet the core truth remains, the media both *shapes*⁸²⁶ and *mirrors* public attitudes.⁸²⁷ That’s as true in the Middle East as in the West. “Arab writers and columnists have a tendency to affirm populist notions, whether they’re good, bad, factual or false,” according to Abdul Rahman al-Habib, a columnist with Saudi Arabia’s *Al-Watan* newspaper. “They write what people want to hear. They write not to educate or challenge the readers’ notions, but rather to affirm the readers’ pre-conceived opinions and views.”⁸²⁸

Most political scientists subscribe to the view that a free press that helps citizens to understand policy decisions is an essential element of democracy. But it does not, in and of itself, produce democracy. The actual political effects are “varied and highly conditional.”⁸²⁹ Shanto Iyengar has demonstrated that media can “prime” audiences by highlighting some issues and ignoring others, as well as “frame” stories in such a way as to contextualize an issue to bolster a particular viewpoint,⁸³⁰ but, as one study of media in Eastern Europe concluded, these effects are less likely to *influence* public opinion and attitudes than to *reinforce* them.⁸³¹ Legal scholar Monroe Price is among those who emphasize the complex relationship between media and the emergence of democracy. His 2002 co-edited volume brings together analyses of political transformation in ten nations in transition, demonstrating that while media liberalization can be a facilitating factor in the emergence of democracy, it is neither a requirement nor sufficient alone to bring about political transformation. The factors that form the relationship between media and democracy are many and varied. In short, “the conventional wisdom is most commonly found to be inadequate or simply wrong.”⁸³²

Even when media does help to produce change, it does not necessarily produce the kind of change democracy advocates in the West might hope for. Witness Hamas’ 2005 victory in Palestine. “For every society in which a ‘people’s power’ revolution is helped along by international cheering squads and satellite television,” wrote Catharin Dalpino,

“another is daily becoming more cosmopolitan while adhering to traditional (and often authoritarian) practices.”⁸³³

That may be true, but there are also signs that Arab television is not only emerging as the new battlefield of ideas, but it may even be supplanting at least some of the traditionally more bloody battlefields of the Middle East. Witness Beirut in the waning months of 2006. In an earlier era, the assassination of Christian leader Pierre Gemayel would likely have been the spark that ignited a new round of civil war. But instead, hundreds of thousands of Lebanese supporters of the so-called March 14 Movement took to the streets in a televised reprise of the rallies that forced Syria’s withdrawal. Then, in answer days later, hundreds of thousands of Hezbollah supporters staged their own mass protests, likewise transmitted live, 24/7 across the region and around the world. For the moment, the power of the camera had trumped the power of the gun.

2) RESTRUCTURING THE ARAB MEDIA LANDSCAPE

There has been a television revolution in the Arab world, of that there is no doubt. Arab satellite television news was born in the early 1980s with the Middle East Broadcasting Centre, owned by Saudi interests, and took its current form with the arrival of Al-Jazeera in 1996. It was an answer to CNN, the BBC and other Western channels flooding the airwaves of the Middle East. Those channels had monopolized coverage of the 1990-91 Gulf war. For Arab governments, satellite TV was an attempt to take back some control of the message, even if it meant that long suppressed ideas might also seep in.

The arrival of Arab satellite television brought urban renewal to McLuhan’s “global village.”⁸³⁴ No longer did all the world view events through a Western lens. But neither could Arab governments any longer control the televised message. Most of the clichés that have been written about Al-Jazeera and its successors are true: The genie was out of the bottle; with their fingers in the electronic dike, Arab governments tried vainly to stem the flow of information, with only limited success. Al-Jazeera reframed – and in many cases *created* – the debate. By serving as a forum for diverse – and once rarely-heard – views, the Qatar-based channel and its imitators provided an outlet where otherwise there was none, establishing “a common, core Arab narrative.”⁸³⁵ But that electronic revolution has yet to be matched by even the beginnings of a political revolution. Satellite TV’s grand opening of the

marketplace of ideas was an important first step in the process of democratization, but it was just that – a first step.

Hazem Saghie, a columnist with the pan-Arab daily *Al-Hayat*, once told an international editors gathering that "Al-Jazeera is the most influential [political] party in the Arabic World"⁸³⁶ It has also been suggested that Middle East reality shows like *Super Star* and *Star Academy*, on which viewers vote for their favorites, have offered Arabs their first real taste of democracy.⁸³⁷ Both these observations are vast oversimplifications. What has arisen on Al-Jazeera and its successors, like Al-Arabiya, Abu Dhabi TV, LBC, Future TV and the rest, is a forum for discussion, offering debates that are "a verbalization of Arab publics' critiques of government."⁸³⁸ On some level, these broadcasts acts as a safety valve, releasing the pent-up anger within the Arab body politic without overtly threatening governments. News programs meanwhile, shine a spotlight on some of the worst excesses of the region's regimes. "For democratic institutions to survive and flourish, there has to be a source of trusted information," writes Philip Meyer.⁸³⁹ But mass communication does not equal – or necessarily produce – mass democratization. "There remains a large gap between an informed citizenry and an empowered citizenry," according to Rami Khouri, editor-at-large of Beirut's *Daily Star*.⁸⁴⁰ For evidence, one needs look no further than Iraq, with its plethora of media outlets and paucity of political stability.

"Democracy may be a political system, but it is also a social ethos," argues Fawaz Turki, a former *Arab News* columnist fired for criticizing governments in the Muslim world. "How responsive can a country be to such an ethos when its people have, for generations, existed with an ethic of fear – fear of originality, fear of innovation, fear of spontaneity, fear of life itself – and have had instilled in them the need to accept orthodoxy, dependence and submission?"⁸⁴¹

That is not to say satellite television channels – and the journalists who staff them – do not have an impact. "There is no *Kifaya* if there is no TV," in the view of Abdulwahab Badrakhan, long-time senior editor at *Al-Hayat*.⁸⁴² Television, says Al-Jazeera senior producer Samir Khader, is "part of the revolution."⁸⁴³ In places like Tunisia, where the government and its cronies control all mass circulation media, "people in different towns and villages in Tunis who can't know what happens in their country are able to know those

things and this creates a new public opinion in our society. It is a very new situation that makes a pressure on the government,” says Rashid Khashana, editor of a free opposition newspaper.⁸⁴⁴ Giselle Khouri, who hosts a Beirut-based program on Al-Jazeera’s rival, Al-Arabiya, privately-owned by Saudi interests, believes a watershed for the Arab media came during heart-wrenching coverage of the death of Mohammed al-Durra, a 12-year old Palestinian boy whose final moments, shielded by his father as they were trapped under a hail of Israeli gunfire, were caught on videotape by a Palestinian cameraman and shown around the world.⁸⁴⁵ “I guess this is the point where the Arab media realized the importance of Arab media and Arab television,” she told me later. “Because the opinion *mondiale* changed – their opinion about terrorism, about the Arab world, about being a victim.”

The “demonstration effects”⁸⁴⁶ of satellite TV coverage of the anti-Syrian marches in Lebanon and Egypt’s *Kifaya* (Enough!) movement inspired Jordanian protestors to emulate in their own demonstrations the visual props of the Lebanese movement, while government opponents in Tunisia adopted a rallying cry reminiscent of Egypt’s *Enough!* But the façade of change falls short of real change. “In spite of the exaggerated importance attributed to pan-Arab satellite TV stations as agents of political change and the near-neurotic fixation of the American administration on Al-Jazeera, these TV channels have yet to show *a single* case in which they played a major role as the vehicle of change,” researcher Hanna Ziadeh observed.⁸⁴⁷

The 2005 Egyptian elections demonstrated the gulf between the act of *reporting on* the democratic process and the *production of* a democratic result. The fact that Egyptians and other Arab viewers of satellite television were able to see bloody images of baton-wielding thugs driving opposition voters away from the polls, hear human rights officials denouncing the results, or watch as opposition presidential candidate Ayman Nour was taken away to prison, did nothing to halt the abuses or prevent the Mubarak regime from declaring the vote “completely fair.”⁸⁴⁸ The elections “helped to open up public debate in the country,” Human Rights Watch concluded, “[b]ut the main features of decades-long authoritarian rule remain in place, making a truly free and fair election at this moment beyond reach.”⁸⁴⁹ Real democracy requires the infrastructure of civil society. In Egypt, that is embryonic at best. In many other parts of the Arab world, it is virtually non-existent. As one study of the media

and political evolution in Eastern Europe concluded, “democratization through the media is highly improbable, if not outright impossible.”⁸⁵⁰ As for infotainment and other forms of pseudo-democratic participation, charges of vote-rigging and manipulation on Arab TV reality shows have led some commentators to draw parallels with actual elections in the region, where regimes “cook the results” if they don’t like them. Marc Lynch has noted, “Like Al-Jazeera’s online polls, reality TV gives the illusion of participation and democracy, but it is easily manipulated and has no real impact on the world.”⁸⁵¹

The same might be said of news and talk stations. There, Arabs can vent their political emotions without – necessarily – endangering the region’s political status quo. While, in theory, satellite television can mobilize publics, this presumes a unified agenda around which the channels are seeking mobilization. Al-Jazeera’s “vision and mission statement” declares that the channel “aspires to ... support the right of the individual to acquire information and strengthen the values of tolerance, democracy and the respect of liberties and human rights.”⁸⁵² Even if one accepts the notion that Al-Jazeera’s *raison d’être* is democratic change, some find it much harder to argue that the region’s other satellite news powerhouse, Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya, shares that goal, much less their many and varied competitors among the 200+ channels on the Arab satellite spectrum. However, Al-Arabiya’s Giselle Khouri rejects doubts that the channel is advocating for change. She says the seeming contradiction between the Saudi ownership and an agenda of change is just part of the inherent “schizophrenia” of the Arab world.⁸⁵³ As Kai Hafez observes, “the democracy agenda remains discontinuous and reactive.”⁸⁵⁴ Some of that reactivity comes from government television stations, which have been forced to respond to the avalanche of new – sometimes unwelcome – ideas pouring into their countries via satellite. “If you do not talk [about these issues] on your local channels, another channel will talk about it with the wrong information. This is more difficult if the public knows about these issues the wrong way and it sticks to their minds,” explains Mohammed al Gamsha of Saudi TV. “Then it is difficult to correct it.”⁸⁵⁵

Arab satellite channels represent an array of interests that span the ideological divide; from Hezbollah’s Al-Manar to the Lebanese Broadcasting Company (LBC), founded by Lebanon’s right-wing Christian Phalangist Party and now financed by a group of

Lebanese and Saudi investors.⁸⁵⁶ “Arabs [have] proved that they have different voices,” says Giselle Khouri of Al-Arabiya.⁸⁵⁷ The strength is that channel-surfers in the Middle East can get a taste of a diverse range of opinion. The weakness is that everyone has an ideological axe to grind.

Lebanon itself is a microcosm of this discontinuity. A cacophony of opinions has always characterized the Lebanese media landscape, where news organizations were largely bought and paid for by paymasters representing the entire spectrum of Arab political thought.⁸⁵⁸ Recent years have witnessed an ebb and flow of that politicization. The lead-up to the Hariri assassination saw what Nabil Dajani, chairman of the Department of Mass Communication at the American University in Beirut, calls a “re-feudalization of the public sphere” in which the media in general, and television in particular, “reflect[ed] and in turn reinforce[d] the characteristics and contradictions of Lebanon’s political and tribal confessional society.”⁸⁵⁹ That gave way to the aforementioned emergent sense of unity following the assassination campaign against reporters, which then collapsed in the face of the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict in the summer of 2006 as various media outlets initially took up positions for and against the Shi’ite militia, then coalesced in opposition to the mounting Israeli attacks that would claim more than 1,000 lives, and eventually splintered once more, assuming positions reflecting the heightened tensions the war produced among the country’s various political and feudal factions. “Lebanon does not have a free press,” argues Dajani. “Wealth, power and sectarianism are intimately intertwined in the Lebanese media, and knowledge plays no mediating role.” Instead:

What we find today in Lebanese television is a distinct imbalance between public interest and the interest of the political, financial and economic forces in the country [and] [t]elevision’s new divisions advance the larger agenda of the tribal/sectarian authorities of which they are a small part.⁸⁶⁰

Despite the communal tendencies, Hanna Ziadeh credits Lebanon’s domestic television channels with “creating a democratic space, of establishing a greater relationship of trust and identification with the fractured Lebanese public than any pan-Arab TV is able to establish with the national sub-divisions of their pan-Arab public.”⁸⁶¹ However, that credit may be premature. The Lebanese media may be free of overt government controls, but as

Dajani points out, “[f]reedom of expression by the media does not bring about democracy except when access to all media channels is made possible to all Lebanese groups. True democracy cannot be achieved when the media serve as advocates, limiting access to some factions and denying this access to others.” Television helped the masses in Martyr’s Square achieve with the Syrians what the “national resistance movement” achieved against the Israelis in the south in 2000 and Hezbollah repeated in the summer of 2006: they drove out an invader. Changes to the political structures that would make Lebanon a more representative democracy are likely to be equally hard-won. That became evident in the post-war power struggle between Hezbollah and the Lebanese government.

In the previous three decades, such confrontations quickly resulted in armed conflict. An argument can be made that 24/7 pan-Arab television coverage of Hezbollah’s mass rally and subsequent sit-in encampment outside the prime minister’s office provided the Shi’ite group with a form of political leverage previously available only through the barrel of a gun. But the limits of this new virtual political sphere quickly became apparent. As regional TV channels grew bored with the interminable (and largely sedentary) sit-in, the eye of the camera shifted away to other, more “interesting” stories. It was not long after that the first armed clashes took place, quickly followed – on the eve of the anniversary of Hariri’s assassination – by the bombing of two busloads of civilians, an act which – amplified by television – sent a shudder through Lebanese society and the Arab world as a whole. The old ways still had their place. Yet the following day, tens of thousands of Lebanese were back in Martyr’s Square to mark Hariri’s death, as pro-government politicians played to the live television cameras that they knew were once more carrying their message across the region and around the world.

3) IMPACT OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL MEDIA

Ironically, the source of satellite television’s influence is also its Achilles Heel. Pan-Arab TV functions as a political change agent on a regional, rather than national, level. Al-Jazeera and the others focus on pan-Arab issues, such as Iraq, Palestine and major stories like the Lebanon crisis. Purely domestic topics are largely outside the purview of these channels. “The local issues are the primary issues that touch the human directly, just like life: education, poverty, unemployment, and corruption. And these issues are not dealt with

closely on satellite channels for many reasons,” says Jaber Obeid, a presenter at Abu Dhabi TV. “Unfortunately some of the satellite channels run after broad headlines like Palestine and Iraq. But when it comes to dealing with political participation and plurality in a certain country, they do not deal with issues like that – like corruption and unemployment –that concerns the citizen directly.”⁸⁶² Yet the terrestrial channels do not tackle them either.

“There is huge amount of information that is missing because the local stations will not provide it to the viewer and we do not provide it to the viewer because it is local,” explains Al-Arabiya news chief Nabil Khatib. “Things that would make the Arabs better citizens by knowing more about their own realities they are not getting it from anywhere. So there is a huge portion of important data that is missing from their consciousness and this is negatively affecting any democratization process.”⁸⁶³

“On the local level we ignore the local aspects of interest to the people, such as raising children and educating them and leave these national issues for larger issues such as Iraq and Palestine,” confirms Abd el-Latif el-Menawy, head of news at Egypt TV. “This is one way that some of the state owned channels use to escape, because of their inability to tackle local topics. Most of [my] colleagues working in the local media lack the concept of local news.”⁸⁶⁴ Aside from Lebanon, those local stations are controlled by the very governments that have so much to lose in the event of change. “We cannot afford to be objective,” Hussein Jamal, the head of political programming in Kuwait television, candidly told a group of colleagues. “Redlines are drawn around political issues” that are both regional and local.

The issue of the Sahara, the issue of relations between one country and the other, a local internal issue between the opposition and the government, the issue of the elections. Look at the television channels; if you allow a candidate in the elections to appear for 30 seconds, then you should also show the other candidate. And this is why we gave up the candidates. We tried not to deal with these political issues.⁸⁶⁵

In every Arab country, television reporters face the same challenge so succinctly explained by Tarek Abdel-Gaber, director of www.masrelyoum.com and former

correspondent for Egypt TV: "Domestically, there are instructions about things."⁸⁶⁶ For Palestine TV, according to director general Bassim Abu Samaya, "The politician is the one who decides if the media will follow up on the political issues or the economic and social issues."⁸⁶⁷ Samir Khader of Al-Jazeera recalls that when he worked at Jordan TV, so pervasive was the notion that they were working as an extension of the government that staffers were not allowed to call themselves journalists. "It was forbidden," he told me.⁸⁶⁸ That same psychology exists at some government owned newspapers. "If you look at media locally within the state, the journalist look upon themselves as officials paid by somebody, mainly by the state, and not as journalists, free people, holding their heads up and doing a profession," says Aref Hiijaw, director of programs at Al-Jazeera and former head of the Media Institute at Birzeit University on the West Bank.⁸⁶⁹

And then there is the fact of overt repression. The assassination of journalists in Lebanon; The jailing of journalists in Syria; The legal, physical, and psychological harassment of journalists in Egypt; The Middle East is still a place where journalists can, as in the case of one outspoken Saudi editor, be arrested for "harboring destructive thoughts."⁸⁷⁰ When Libya's most prominent political prisoner was jailed after he called Mu'ammar Qaddafi a dictator in an interview with the US government satellite channel AlHurra, a Libyan security official explained, "He's mentally disturbed and we're worried he will cause a problem for us."⁸⁷¹ A report by the Arab Network for Human Rights information chronicled a campaign against journalists in Egypt, Tunisia and Bahrain that included detentions, physical attacks, disappearances and "the most degrading violations, such as framing criminal cases against those opposition forces, attempting to defame their reputations and spreading fear amongst citizens to prevent them from participating in public affairs."⁸⁷² For Palestinian journalists, the challenges can be particularly complicated. "First, there are the families and the society," explains Al-Jazeera's Hiijaw, "because the authority has been broken down by the Israeli occupation so the families are masters of the society. You can not criticize a minister, not because he is a minister and the authority is behind him or any of the security apparatuses, no, it is because his family is big. Number two, I would say is the militias, and they are in abundance now. Number three is our heritage. You have also other countries you can feel their pressure. And then there are the religious people who have become very powerful."⁸⁷³

There is a symbiotic aspect to the relationship between Arab satellite television channels – particularly Al-Jazeera – and democratization movements in the Arab world. Television news audiences rise and fall with the shifting tides of world events. Arab satellite channels covered the anti-Syrian demonstrations in Lebanon and subsequent mass rallies because they were good – telegenic – stories. Not incidentally, they were also good for ratings. Put simply, big news is good news for 24-hour television channels. CNN's reputation was made with the 1990-91 Gulf War, when its reporters were among the only Western journalists in Baghdad during the US bombardment. The fledgling channel saw its ratings skyrocket during the conflict, only to drop down to pre-war levels after the conflict ended.⁸⁷⁴ Similarly, Al-Jazeera's reputation was cemented after 9/11, with its exclusive access to tapes from bin Laden and high-profile coverage of the US invasions of Afghanistan and Iraq, just as Fox News in the US seized huge market share with its unabashed flag-waving in the months and years after 9/11.⁸⁷⁵

Critics have accused Fox and other US channels of sensationalizing and fear-mongering in order to keep news interest – hence ratings – high.⁸⁷⁶ The democratization movement in the Arab world provided Arab satellite channels with a story of continuing interest for their pan-Arab audiences at a time when the daily drumbeat of bad news from Iraq was producing conflict overdose in Arab viewers. The *kifaya* story, like Hezbollah's 2006 battle with Israel, also reinforced the self-view of the television journalists themselves: "The powerful images from the streets resonated with the core Al-Jazeera identity and narrative: the Arab people fighting against the repression and corruption of Arab regimes."⁸⁷⁷ Arab media have become players in the drama, a parallel to the "accelerating trend" among US correspondents who construct "themselves as both reporting on and constituent of media events."⁸⁷⁸

4) MEDIATING CHANGE

Media is power, nowhere more so than in the Middle East. By controlling the messenger while fostering some perception of media independence, Arab governments can at least attempt to control the nature and pace of change. At a major Saudi-financed conference on the media in Dubai in the fall of 2005, I asked the president of the Arab Thought Foundation, Prince Bandar bin Khaled al Faisal, why a nation that was, after all, a

feudal monarchy with no pretensions to representational democracy, would finance a gathering on media freedom, itself an historic precursor to democracy. "Journalism is a part of change," said Bandar, the owner of Saudi Arabia's *Al-Watan* newspaper and grandson of the late King Faisal. "And this conference is an effort to say, 'OK, maybe we should expedite the process a little bit because we really do have a lot to lose.'"⁸⁷⁹

It was easy – and dangerous – for outsiders to romanticize the Arab media revolution. Yet all Arab satellite TV channels had red lines that surrounded their coverage. For Al-Arabiya, that involved "terrorism and anything to do with religion and religious politics" a senior news executive told me. For Al-Jazeera, the sensitivity involved Qatari foreign policy. In the complex evaluation that took places in the newsroom and at the upper reaches of Al-Jazeera's management before controversial stories were aired, the essential question became, 'Will this have a negative impact on Qatar's foreign policy?'"⁸⁸⁰ Al-Jazeera put Qatar on the global map and gave the Qatari royal family an important weapon in the regional geo-political equation – as did the shift of the US central command from Saudi Arabia to Doha. But the Qataris walked a fine line in exercising that influence as well as the need to maintain stable relations with fellow Arab countries and the US. One Al-Jazeera staffer quoted Sheik Hamad bin Thamer al-Thani, the Qatari royal who ran the growing Al-Jazeera empire, as telling the staff on at least one occasion, "Do you think the Emir likes getting angry calls from the President of the United States?"⁸⁸¹ Another sign of the link between Al-Jazeera and Qatari foreign policy came in the late spring of 2007 when Wadah Khanfar, the Palestinian director general of the Al-Jazeera group of channels, was removed from the corporate board and demoted back to his earlier position as managing director of Al-Jazeera Arabic, reportedly for his pro-Hamas sympathies, which conflicted with Qatar's support for the Fatah faction of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas.⁸⁸²

The new board also included a former Qatari ambassador to the US, Hamad Al Kuwari, and Mahmoud Shammam, the editor of the Arabic edition of *Newsweek* and critic of Al-Jazeera's coverage, leading to claims by Khanfar's defenders that the channel was about to be silenced. "The evidence is clear that the US government is using its influence in Qatar to try to neuter the station's independence, bring it to heel and shift its coverage in a pro-western direction. If it succeeds, it would be a disaster for the Arab world and its chance to

shape an independent and democratic future,” Galloway wrote London’s *Guardian* newspaper.⁸⁸³ As the above anecdote illustrates, not only was there no guarantee that satellite television would help spur democratization, but the reality indicated that the rise of satellite television was not necessarily a harbinger of the emergence of greater media freedom in the Arab world. Rather, what was emerging was a corporate feudal model of media ownership, with television shifting from government control to the control of powerful business interests closely aligned with – or part of – existing authoritarian regimes. “I’m completing against countries, not companies!” Mohammed Alayyan, publisher and chairman of the independent newspaper *Al-Gad* and CEO of ATV in Jordan, complained.⁸⁸⁴ “Unfortunately,” said Nabil Khatib, executive editor at Al-Arabiya, “this is the game. This will continue until the public will have its own mechanisms to defend itself and to push us media to be set free and respect the ethics. This will take time.”⁸⁸⁵ As Ali al-Ahmed, director general of Abu Dhabi television put it, “Many channels are there for profit; others are there because the owner wants a channel.”⁸⁸⁶

It was a natural extension of a similar system of control in the pan-Arab print media. “*Al-Hayat* is not a commercial project,” the paper’s then number two, Abdulwahab Badrakhan told me in 2005. “It is in the first place a political project, like *Asharq Al-Awsat*. *Asharq Al-Awsat* and *Al-Hayat* never [make] money, and you can understand that because you can consider us as public relations.”⁸⁸⁷ Hussein Shobokshi, whose reporting appeared both in *Asharq Al-Awsat* and on Al-Arabiya, said these Saudi dominated outlets all put out “a beautiful display, a strong progressive product,” but ultimately media owned by this new generation of Arab media moguls “all wear the straight hats of the government or semi-government.” Echoing the comments of Prince Bandar, Shobokshi said the reform agenda of Arab journalists had Arab leaders on the defensive. “That is why they want to own the media as well. They are so nervous because they see it as a catapult of change, but they want to control the catapult of change.”⁸⁸⁸ The emir of Qatar didn’t finance Al-Jazeera to get a membership card at Washington’s National Press Club. He did it for the same reason he invited the US Central Command to set up shop outside Doha—to make himself a player in the region. That’s also why the Saudis and Emiratis were building media empires in the Gulf, Jordan’s King Abdullah was talking up media liberalization and Syrian intelligence and its Lebanese minions were – all evidence suggests – killing journalists.⁸⁸⁹ And as Sakr

has pointed out, the growth of these new politically-powerful media conglomerates has not yet produced structures that would enable journalists “to collaborate across companies or borders to defend their right to report.”⁸⁹⁰

In their landmark study of American journalism, veteran editors Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel warned that, “We are faced with the possibility that independent news will be replaced by self-interested commercialism posing as news.”⁸⁹¹ In the Arab world, there was an additional danger: that independent news would be still-borne. Economic sustainability is one of the greatest challenges to media organizations in countries transitioning from an authoritarian model to a free press. The tendency is for a plethora of media organizations to spring up in the first heady days after deregulation, fragmenting the market and making it difficult for anyone to make money. As Russia exemplified, the survivors are frequently gobbled up by business tycoons – usually cronies of the government-of-the-day – and the rest are susceptible to economic coercion, becoming mouthpieces for political parties and special interests.⁸⁹² The Arab world in the first decade of the new century showed the signs that it might be in the process of skipping that intermediate, free-for-all step. The development of Arab media stood in stark contrast to the pattern elsewhere, such as Hungary, where “[m]edia globalization favors highly concentrated Western interests in alliance with powerful domestic corporations.”⁸⁹³ In the Arab world, outside investment was generally not required. So a purely-home grown industry was emerging, but it was one that replaced the government-controlled media feudalism of old with a form of corporate feudalism, in which wealthy individuals closely aligned with – or part of – governments built vast media empires. Unlike in the Balkans or Africa, virtually unlimited capital in the Middle East meant that poor, scrappy journalistic entrepreneurs were few and far between. Idealistic startups like Jordan’s first private FM station, Ammanet, a spin-off of an innovative Internet radio station based in the West Bank, were exceptions to the rule of corporate feudalism. The overwhelming number of pseudo-independent media outlets in the region were owned or heavily-influenced by members of royal families, such as Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya and its cousin MBC; tools of mega-rich would-be politicians and influence peddlers, such as Hariri’s Future TV and Gen. Michel Aoun’s OTV in Lebanon; or bully pulpits for political parties and preachers of every stripe, from a

channel run by the Egyptian Wafd Party to the “moderate” Islamic entertainment channel Al-Resalah (The Message), owned by Saudi billionaire Walid bin Talal.

“Do private media and channels exist – and I mean by ‘private’ that they are independent from the authority of the audience or the ruling authority?” Bassim Abu Samaya, director general, Palestinian Radio & TV, asked rhetorically at a gathering of Arab broadcasters. “No. This does not exist. There are no private channels independent from the funding and the authority of the funding sides. And in many cases it is an economic corporation or institution that controls the sovereignty of this channel or that one, in one way or another.”⁸⁹⁴ “All the media represent a political party or religious party,” Michel Murr told me in the fall of 2005.⁸⁹⁵ The Lebanese Christian tycoon was in a position to know. He was in the process of re-launching Murr TV, the anti-Syrian station closed down by Lebanon’s pro-Syrian president several years before.

This corporate feudalism particularly dominated in the Gulf media. It was epitomized by Saudi Sheikh Waleed al Ibrahim, whose sister was married to King Fahd. His MBC group launched the first “private” Arab satellite channel and controlled Al-Arabiya, the main rival to Al-Jazeera.⁸⁹⁶ “The private sector in the Arab world still considers itself in alliance with monarchies and with regimes. It will not confront them,” according to Khatib of Al-Arabiya.⁸⁹⁷ While they were officially “independent,” the way in which Sheikh Waleed’s channels were highly responsive to Saudi political interests was demonstrated with coverage of the 2006 Lebanon war. In the early stages of the conflict, when the Saudi government was criticizing Hezbollah for provoking the Israelis, Al-Arabiya’s coverage was low-key, downplaying the story apparently in order to avoid stirring up Arab public opinion in support of the Shi’ite militia and, by extension, its Iranian sponsors.⁸⁹⁸ The same was true three years earlier in the case of *Jihad on Horseback*, a documentary about the Darfur crisis directed and produced by a Lebanese member of the MBC staff. Sources at the channel told this writer that the program, highly critical of the Sudan regime, was killed after the direct intervention of King Abdallah of Saudi Arabia. As IREX concluded in its *Media Sustainability Index*,

Money available for media business investment has allowed outlets to better professionalize and access to new technologies ... [but] ... These oil-rich

countries have demonstrated the ability to develop a media industry without loosening press freedoms beyond points that threaten the governing monarchies and regimes of the region.⁸⁹⁹

"In general the rule of the game is that there is no black or white. There is always a grey area," said Khatib, referring to the restrictions within which the pan-Arab satellite channels worked.

It would not be realistic to say our colleagues in the newsroom there are no redlines. There are redlines everywhere, sometimes for totally different reasons. There is no clear law. And there is no ethics that are accepted or agreed on. For example, it is known that nobody will go and investigate [issues like] where or how this fortune of money rewards of oil is being distributed. You will not see it on Al-Jazeera about Saudi Arabia, because if they say it about Saudi Arabia somebody will say it about Qatar. So they will not say and we will not say it. So it is a great step forward to have non-governmental media, but it is still far from realizing and its political role and social role.⁹⁰⁰

Khatib told me that it was understood within Al-Arabiya that he would push the envelope until owner Sheikh Waleed al Ibrahim received a call from someone in a position of power telling them to back off. Then, he explained, he and senior management engage in a carefully choreographed dance. Khatib gave the example of the channel's coverage of Egypt: "He would call us, saying 'What you have on Egypt? I am getting phone calls from the President's office,' and I would say, 'We have so and so,' and he says, 'That is OK.' 'OK' means for me that is OK [and the story stays on the air]. Then in 6 or 8 hours he [calls again and] says, 'I called and ordered you to stop it.'" Only then is the piece pulled off the air. "He needs to maintain some relationship with them [the Saudi royal family]."⁹⁰¹

Ghassan Tuani, patriarch of the dynasty that controlled Lebanon's *An Nahar* newspaper, was contemptuous of such antics. "Today there is no Arab media," he told me in 2005. "Audio visual [TV] is theatrical. These politics are theatrics. The premium media is either owned by governments or controlled by them," he said, adding that it was impossible

to have serious news organizations “built on sand.” He had no more respect for the many journalists working for government-owned or controlled media outlets. “Why do you want a civil servant in Egypt to risk his life for what he is going to write? He is going to get his salary anyway.”⁹⁰²

It all came back to power and how it is leveraged. Arab satellite television might have been helping to fuel political reform but it also remained a prisoner of those reforms. The Egyptian elections provided an example of how this corporate feudalism affected would-be democratization efforts. In an attempt to maintain what many observers called the façade of democracy, the Mubarak regime imposed an equal time rule on the influential news broadcasts at Egyptian state television, requiring that Mubarak’s main challengers for the presidency receive the same amount of on-air exposure as the president. But the media-savvy consultants brought in by Mubarak’s son, campaign manager and heir-apparent, Gamal Mubarak, quickly arranged an end-run on the rules. They approached Ahmed Bahgat, the owner of Dream TV, a four-year old Egyptian satellite station, with a deal that gave Dream the exclusive rights to broadcast Mubarak’s rallies. As a result, the Mubarak campaign gained access to one of the largest television audiences in Egypt without the need to offer equal time. At the same time, just months before the campaign began, an advertising agency owned by another businessman with close ties to the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) purchased the rights to Dream’s advertising time, then refused to sell commercials to opposition candidates. As journalist Charles Levinson wrote of the incident, “The experience with private satellite channels such as Dream, operating in the shadow of authoritarian regimes, cannot replace a truly independent media.”⁹⁰³ Still, the picture was not all dark. Mahmoud Abdulhadi, who headed Al-Jazeera’s training arm, believed the media moguls were ultimately in for a surprise. “You cannot say that if you have money and you have this tool [Arab media outlets], you can control journalism,” he said. Now that the free press genie was emerging from the bottle, he believed, it would be impossible to force it back in.⁹⁰⁴

5) TELEVISION AND PUBLIC OPINION

Television alone cannot make revolutions. It takes people. While “an important learning process is underway” as Arab audiences watched political events unfold on their

television screens, journalist Rami Khouri argued that there remained a “massive center of largely apathetic ordinary citizens who watch all this on television, concerned mainly by taking care of their families.”⁹⁰⁵ That apathy was complicated by television’s tendency to feed society’s short attention span by rapidly shifting from crisis to crisis.⁹⁰⁶ The result is what British scholar Andrew Hoskins calls the “collapse of memory,” a state in which memory “both thrives and falls in the instantaneity of twenty-first century news.”⁹⁰⁷ A year after the “Cedar Revolution,” which so energized proponents of political change, the death knell of Arab democracy was already being sounded. Writing in the spring of 2006 of US efforts to counter the influence of Iran through democratization elsewhere in the region, Michael Young, the Lebanese opinion editor of *The Daily Star*, observed that, “The bulwarks of US policy in the region, the regimes in Egypt and Saudi Arabia, are moribund, and their ability to be flexible, democratic, legitimate, is negligible.”⁹⁰⁸

But one thing *had* changed: The way Arab journalists viewed their own role in the process and the possibilities for the future. As the assassinated columnist Kassir put it not long before his murder: “Thanks to a handful of journalists, we have indeed re-conquered our freedom of opinion and expression—if not yet fully our freedom of information.”

CHAPTER IX: COVERING DARFUR – A QUESTION OF IDENTITY

"The dead don't talk and they don't have representatives."

ELIAS KHOURI
*GATE OF THE SUN*⁹⁰⁹

There was no story that better demonstrated the limits of the freedom of information in the Arab media, or the degree to which ethnic and religious identity shaped coverage, than the conflict in the Sudanese province of Darfur. Nor was there an issue more controversial among Arab journalists themselves. Not Iraq, where, by the winter of 2008, more than 100 Arab journalists had lost their lives since the US invasion; not Palestine, where journalists were caught between Israel and the Palestinians, and between Fatah and Hamas; not Lebanon, where reporters continued to be caught in the cross-hairs of rival factions and governments.

In Darfur, ethnic Arab militias were preying on ethnic African tribes in what President George Bush had labeled a "genocide."⁹¹⁰ The conflict was a hot-button issue in Arab newsrooms not because of the physical danger involved in reporting the story, but because the issue struck right to the heart of the mission of Arab journalism and the self-identity of those who practiced it. Two gatherings in the spring of 2007 provided a window on the internal debate among Arab journalists as they struggled to rationalize their coverage of the conflict. The first took place in Cairo, when 50 journalists from across the Arab world came together to discuss the challenges and limitations to their reporting;⁹¹¹ the second, two weeks later, at the annual convention of Arab broadcasters in Abu Dhabi.⁹¹² The central issue: "The Arabs see the victims are not Arabs, and we don't care," Khaled Ewais, Al-Arabiya's political producer, told the Cairo gathering.⁹¹³ Fayez el Sheikh Saleik, Khartoum correspondent of *Al-Hayat*, concurred: "Sudan is a marginal country when it comes to the Arab region." Some pointed to an even more insidious issue: In other regional conflicts, Arabs were the victims. In Darfur, Arab militias were the perpetrators. That was not a popular topic among governments or among Arab journalists. "The media are directly responsible for this crisis," an angry representative of the Liberation Front of Darfur told

those assembled in Cairo. While few of the journalists were willing to go quite that far, there was widespread acknowledgement that Darfur was the biggest untold story of the Arab world.

“Arab journalists are working within non-democratic systems, so you can’t expect them to talk about Darfur,” said Saleik of *Al-Hayat*. The Arab media was “ultimately very interconnected with the ruling system” according to Ahmed Hissou, a Syrian journalist working for the Arabic service of Germany’s Deutsche Welle radio, and Arab governments “do not accept any internal crises, whether religious or ethnic.” As a result, said Kamal al-Gizouli of the Sudanese writer’s union, when they do report on Darfur, Arab media “are talking only about sovereignty when the real issue is the rights of people to live in peace.”

The numbers were grim. At that point, more than 250,000 dead; 2.5 million internally displaced; four million in need of relief assistance. “Why is there no debate in the Arab mass media?” asked Nadim Hasbani, Arab media officer for the International Crisis Group. Amani Tawil of the Al-Ahram Center for Strategic Studies offered one explanation: “Selective information.” Television, she said, “reflects the special agenda of each government in the Arab region,” while newspapers “have a tendency to marginalize stories about other Arab governments.” Until the recent Saudi initiative on Darfur, Arab regimes – and thus most Arab media – had a hands-off approach to Sudan. Non-journalists like Roland Marchal of the Centre d’Etudes et de Recherches Internationales in Paris and Khaled Mansour, spokesman for the World Food Program, praised some Western coverage – including that of the BBC and *New York Times* columnist Nicholas Kristof – for putting a human face on the Darfur conflict by focusing on the plight of individuals. *Al-Hayat* was also singled out as “indefatigable in its continuous coverage of the events in Darfur.” But the overwhelming message was that when most Arab media bothered to report on the crisis, they focused on political machinations, not human impact. “Arab media coverage is like a person on a plane looking down,” said Sudanese Member of Parliament and political activist Salih Mahmoud Osman, while Western coverage portrayed the pain of the victims.

But it wasn’t the “experts” alone who were critical. This writer had never heard a group of Arab journalists so brutally frank in public about the pressures and pitfalls of their own coverage. “We Arab journalists, sorry to say, deal with Darfur as governments do,”

said Tahir el-Mardi, Khartoum correspondent for Al-Jazeera. "We have 22 agendas on Darfur [for the 22 Arab countries] and the West has one. Arab journalists, to say the truth, are entangled in political issues." Mohamed Barakat, political editor at the Egyptian daily *Al-Akhabar*, said that in the Arab world, all politics truly were local: "There is an agenda which is local according to the country in which it takes place." Others pointed to the constant talk of Zionist plots and Western conspiracies in Arab coverage of Darfur, the preoccupation with "strategic Arab interests," and what one political editor called the "fantasies" about a Western oil grab, all of which came at the cost of reporting on the human toll. Al-Gizouli of the Sudanese writer's union said the history of Arab journalism was to blame. An entire generation of journalists and intellectuals had been weaned on the notions of Arab mobilization and confrontation in the face of the imperialist and colonialist aggressor. That legacy was heard loudly in the Darfur coverage. "There is no voice but the battle with Israel and the imperialists. That is what has been fed to the Arab intellectuals. If there is no role for Zionists, [the Arab reporter] creates it from his own imagination and Zionism means conspiracy, the main gallows on which hangs the conscience of the journalists."

"The Arab journalist is an offspring of his environment," agreed Hissou of Deutsche Welle "We had imperialism and Zionism with double-standards. Arab officials say Bush is jeopardizing Sudan, so Arab journalists must accept this conspiracy." He read a series of excerpts from Arab coverage that, he claimed, demonstrated that the reporting "is heavily freighted with ideological and political assumptions that ... imperil our journalistic neutrality." Hissou quoted *Al-Hayat's* influential columnist Jihad Khazen as writing that the Bush administration and the Israel lobby were using Darfur "as a smokescreen to hide other crimes, from Palestine to Iraq" and Hissou claimed that while Al-Jazeera had given substantial coverage to Darfur, "it has invited Arab analysts, writers, and physicians to ridicule all reports transmitted by the global television networks on the various acts of murder, rape, and forced displacement." El-Mardi of Al-Jazeera's Khartoum bureau countered by saying that the channel covered the crisis "in an objective manner" and "any topic concerning policy in Sudan has the opinion, the facts and the counter-opinion. If it does not, it does not go to air." However, he added, "Darfur is a political issue in the first instance" and "there is a very thin line between the professional journalist and the political

person.” Ewais of Al-Arabiya presented data showing that Arab media devoted a small fraction of the amount of time and space to Darfur as it does to crises like Iraq, Palestine and Lebanon, while the Western media gives it significantly more attention. Salih, the Sudanese MP, said covering Darfur “doesn’t prevent us from discussing the humanitarian suffering in Darfur as well.” “If we say there are violations of human rights in Darfur, we are not denying violations by Israel and the US in Iraq and Palestine,” agreed Al-Gizouli. Still, he lamented, “It is very hard to put Darfur on a par with Arab stories.”

“I know, sometimes the story is complex and difficult to communicate,” Khaled Mansour of the World Food Program told those gathered, “but the Arab media’s coverage of the humanitarian side of the conflict has been very weak” when compared to that of Western news organizations. For many newspapers, money was a big issue when it came to Darfur. Several Egyptian editors said their publications simply did not have the resources to cover the crisis properly. But others pointed out that the pan-Arab newspapers and satellite TV channels had plenty of money and a level of professionalism that had brought a human face to other regional tragedies. “Al-Jazeera focuses on the human side in Palestine,” said al-Gizouli. “So you have to ask why they don’t do the same in Darfur. There is a double standard on human feelings. Al-Jazeera is operated by Arabs so they show sympathy for the Palestinian and Iraqi people and show the dead babies there, but when it comes to Darfur, they don’t. They want to show Arabs always as victims.”

At times the debate grew heated. Some journalists in the audience objected to the constant criticism. A divide began to arise between the foreign experts and black-skinned Sudanese journalists one side, and, on the other, print reporters from Egypt and other Arab countries. “We are here to participate in a discussion about developing better coverage, not to have scorn heaped on us,” an Egyptian editor snapped at one speaker. “I have traveled to Darfur; I am not here to listen to criticism.” Yet the comment opened a far-ranging discussion about the fact that many Arab news organizations get – and report – a distorted view of Darfur because they visit as part of tours arranged by the Sudanese government which, according to Sudanese columnist Alhaj Warrag, took the view that “everything in Darfur is a conspiracy of the Zionists” and imposed “redlines” on its own media that meant Sudanese reporters could not cover anything about violations of human rights, police or

security.” “I am an Arab and a Muslim and I was nearly ready to accept this,” he said. Then he went to the camps “and I met someone who watched his sister being raped by the Janjaweed [Arab militia].” Barakat of *Al-Akhbar* said guided tours and journalist visits as part of official delegations “pave the way for getting to Darfur but you are besieged by the agenda of this particularly diplomatic mission which means you cannot flee.” The other problem was that such visits present a skewed view. “Most of the journalists invited by the Sudanese government go to camps in good condition, that seem like the Hilton hotel, but Western journalists go in through Chad and see the real situation,” said el-Mardi from Al-Jazeera.

As with the Western media, Arab journalists faced huge logistical hurdles in breaking out of the guided tour approach to covering Darfur. Saleik, the *Al-Hayat* Khartoum correspondent, recalled that for a July 2004 visit to Darfur, he went on a cross-Africa odyssey from Khartoum to Nairobi, to Lagos, to Chad, and finally into Darfur. “The nature of the crisis is different from Iraq or Palestine,” he told the gathering. “In Darfur, you can walk a long time in the desert to reach the news, but in Palestine it’s easy.” Then there’s the issue every reporter ultimately confronts: How important is the story to the editor and the reader? “Palestine and Lebanon was the priority,” Saleik recalled of his coverage in past years. “We sent many stories from Darfur, but they didn’t get published.” “What is news?” asked Hassan Satti of *Asharq Al-Awsat*. “That’s a complicated question. There is the problem of who compiles the news; the psychological and mental structures and cultural and religious dimensions. Coverage is with the spirit of the editor and he can fall victim to his traditions. If it is news, you shouldn’t take a point of view but if you are going to eat, some people will select the best food. Each editor or journalist has his internal censor.” As one Egyptian journalist whispered to me in an aside, “You need to know who you are working for.” He also said that when he tried to write stories about Darfur from Cairo, his editor would ask suspiciously, “Why are you writing this? What is your motive?”

The most emotional attack on Arab media coverage of Darfur came from Nabil Kassem, producer/director of *Jihad on Horseback*, the Darfur documentary commissioned by Al-Arabiya’s parent company MBC three years before but cancelled after pressure from Saudi Arabia. Kassem, who still worked for Al-Arabiya, was bitter about what he called

“fantasy” reports in the Arab media that Arab tribes were forced to flee attacking Africans and claims that the refugee camps were Zionist propaganda. “The Arab tribes fleeing from the Africans, where are they?” he asked. “Then I went to the camps the Arab media said didn’t exist.” Kassem said he left his objectivity in the dust of the Darfur desert. “I am speaking as a humanitarian, not a journalist who is neutral,” he told the gathering. “How can anyone go and see millions of displaced people and remain balanced?”

“Until now, I cannot forget what I saw. I left women and children lying there dying.” With tears in his eyes, he confronted the Egyptian editor who had earlier bristled at criticism of Arab coverage and boasted that he, too, had visited Darfur. “Did you see that? Did you see them dying?” Kassem challenged the startled journalist. “Then why didn’t you write it? I am in a rage. Arabs should be ashamed having one million Muslims begging for help. Shame!” Nabil Hasbani of the International Crisis Group said Al-Arabiya largely abandoned Darfur coverage for several years after the documentary was pulled. Most of the channel’s reporting was confined to pieces filed by UN correspondent Talal Haj. There was “no information from the ground,” which “left the audience thinking the UN controls the crisis” and thus, it’s not an Arab issue. Al-Jazeera also largely ignored the crisis until its coverage “changed drastically” between 2004 and 2006. In the previous year or two, Al-Arabiya’s coverage had likewise dramatically stepped up. “We run very critical coverage of Darfur now. We don’t care who we offend,” one executive of the channel told me. Why then, I asked, had *Jihad on Horseback* been killed and other Darfur reporting abandoned? “Back then,” he said with a sardonic smile, “we cared [who was offended].” That Al-Arabiya’s news executives shared the dais with producer Kassem said much about the change of viewpoint.

Darfur was also on the agenda at the Arab Broadcast Forum in Abu Dhabi two weeks later. “I think we have less coverage from Darfur, print and broadcast media, I think sometimes we editorialize many issues in this part of the world, we feel that this is part of our pan-Arab world and we feel we should keep hands off this,” a representative of Kuwait TV told his colleagues.⁹¹⁴ Samir Sabbah, head of Middle East media for Reuters TV, concurred: “If you watch any Arab station any night you will have reporting on Iraq, on Palestine, but it is rare to see news about Darfur. So no there isn’t enough.” The debate

between those who tracked the Darfur issue and those who covered it, which began in Cairo, continued in Abu Dhabi. And once more Al-Jazeera was in the crosshairs. "Al-Jazeera sees itself as voice of Muslims and Arabs in the world, but why don't they implement this policy in Darfur? Why don't they tell us it's Muslims killing Muslims?" asked Hasbani of ICG. There was a general acknowledgement from Arab broadcasters that Darfur suffered from the same subtle racist overtones that colored US coverage of sub-Saharan Africa, the perception that, in the brutal newsroom maxim, it's just 'more flies on black faces;' just another interminable African conflict. In fact, James Zogby, president of the Arab American Institute, unveiled a new survey that found that more than 80 percent of the Arab public in four Arab countries believes pan-Arab satellite channels should devote more coverage to Darfur.⁹¹⁵ "The myth that Arabs don't care about Darfur is just that, a myth," Zogby told the broadcasters.

That may be so, but some Sudanese journalists were still skeptical that their Arab colleagues would give Darfur more than a glancing look. In Cairo, columnist Warrag used *Auschwitz* as an analogy for Arab media denial of the reality in Darfur. "Can you imagine having your village burned and people say nothing happened to you?" "We shouldn't kid ourselves any coverage of the conflict fraught with practical issues. It's often dangerous, it saps resources and access is difficult. But it's a story we must cover," CNN's Nasser told the Abu Dhabi gathering. Andrew Simmons of Al-Jazeera English said Western and Arab journalists alike – "regardless of your branding" – were obligated to devote resources to covering the conflict. "We have a responsibility to our viewers to analyze, explain, to further the political debate over Darfur."

For Simmons, a British journalist, and Nasser, an Arab working for a leading US network, such an approach was self-evident. But it was far more problematic for Arab news organizations that operated at the pleasure of their governmental and corporate masters, such an approach was far more problematic. And for Arab journalists, stepped in a culture in which Arabs were the victims – rarely the aggressors – it was an approach that challenged their very self-view. Which underlined the ultimate question, raised in Cairo by an angry and frustrated representative of the Darfur Liberation Front: "Arab mass media talk about journalists being killed in Iraq. But why don't you send journalists to be killed in Darfur?"

The debate over Darfur encapsulated in one story the many conflicting pressures that determine what makes it into the newspapers and onto the television broadcasts of the Arab world, and what does not. Herein lay the many levels of Shoemaker and Reese's hierarch-of-influences. Darfur did not fit the script and thus many Arab journalists felt they could not, or should not, cover the story.

Ideology was the overarching factor shaping coverage; a desire not to "keep hands off" this "part of our pan-Arab world" and a recognition that the bloodbath in Darfur was "an offspring of our own environment." Here were the issues of "confrontation and mobilization" that had long defined the Arab media. Arabs were at war, according to this thinking, and a mobilization press had no business undermining the cause because, after all, there was "a thin line between a journalist and a political person." Extra-media influences were also clearly at work. The ability of the president of Sudan to pick up the phone and kill the story demonstrated, in spades, the truth to the theory that "The more economic and political power a source has, the more likely he or she is to influence news reports,"⁹¹⁶ and the fact that the main shareholder in al-Arabiya's parent company was willing to kill the story demonstrates both the power of ownership. The comment that "newspapers marginalize stories about other governments" could have come straight from Shoemaker and Reese's hypotheses. As the Egyptian journalist told me, "You need to know who you are working for."

Beyond politics, the cost of coverage also underlined the import of political economy in the journalistic equation. "Events that are congruent with media routines are more likely to be covered than discongruent events," according to Shoemaker and Reese, and, given the logistical difficulties of coverage, Darfur was the very definition of discongruent.⁹¹⁷ The fact, as the Zogby survey showed, that the Arab public cared little until they knew the victims were Muslims made it easy for the media to ignore Darfur, since the public's appetite is another factor influencing media content.

But at root of the lack of Darfur coverage was the self-view of the journalists themselves. Shoemaker and Reese's hypothesis that "People who are similar to a journalist

will be covered differently from people who are dissimilar”⁹¹⁸ was played evident in the glaring lack of headlines in the Arab media. The protagonists in the conflict were part of their “imagined community.” The victims, in terms of ethnicity, were an Other.

SECTION THREE: RESULTS

CHAPTER X: METHODOLOGY

Believing that the Arab region is a homogenous unit and that development of the news genre has gone through a unified process is a misconception.

NOHA MELLOR, THE MAKING OF ARAB NEWS⁹¹⁹

1) APPROACH

This study is modeled in part on a series of profiles of American journalists led by Weaver and Wilhoit beginning in 1986.⁹²⁰ Like that work, it is based on a survey administered to a select group of journalists, in this case Arab journalists working for the leading pan-Arab and national news organizations. Unlike Weaver and Wilhoit, which primarily focused on questions directly related to the demographics, working conditions and perceived role of journalists, this study expands the scope to include attitudes toward a range of international issues being covered by Arab journalists in the post-9/11 era.

The main research tool for this study was a 48-question multiple-choice survey⁹²¹ administered to Arab journalists in 12 Arab countries,⁹²² as well as Arab journalists based in the UK, US, Europe and elsewhere but working for Arab news media distributed in the Arab world (as opposed to those primarily serving Arab emigrant communities). The survey was designed to provide data that would allow a number of cross comparisons, including Arab journalists and US journalists; Arab journalists and journalists from other developing world countries; and Arab journalists and their own populations (the latter relates to the accusation common in the US that journalists do not represent the people to whom, and about whom, they are reporting⁹²³). Only a select portion of this data will be analyzed for the purposes of this dissertation.

For the initial draft of the survey instrument, questions were drawn from the following sources:

- **Those asked of US journalists:** Weaver and Wilhoit,⁹²⁴ the 2004 edition of the annual *State of the News Media* survey produced by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press;⁹²⁵ and Hess' study of Washington, D.C. reporters.⁹²⁶

- **Those asked of the general public in the Middle East and broader Muslim world:** The 2004 version of Zogby's six-nation Impressions of America survey;⁹²⁷ the 2002 Gallup poll of the Islamic world;⁹²⁸ the Arab world portion of the World Values Survey;⁹²⁹ and Moaddel's surveys in Egypt, Iran and Jordan.⁹³⁰
- **Those asked of journalists in the developing world:** Ramaprasad,⁹³¹ Ramaprasad and Kelly,⁹³² and Ramaprasad and Rahman.⁹³³ Other questions were inspired by studies of Indonesian journalists conducted by Romano,⁹³⁴ Steele⁹³⁵ and Hanitzsch.⁹³⁶ At a later stage, when the survey had been tested and was about to be finalized (detailed below), a set of questions from the then-newly-published Ramaprasad and Hamdy survey of Egyptian journalists was included.⁹³⁷

Over the course of several months, duplicate or overlapping questions were eliminated, unclear or culturally inappropriate language and framing was altered, additional questions were formulated and, ultimately, many questions were eliminated due to practical limitations of space/length. The initial draft, which included both multiple choice and Likert scale questions, was then reviewed for methodological soundness by psychologist and survey researcher Jeremy Ginges, Ph.D., then of the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan (where the author was then a visiting professor) and now on the faculty of the New School in New York. Dr. Ginges also inserted several questions for his own research purposes that are not discussed in this dissertation (see Appendix D). The English-language version of the survey can be found in Appendix A. The Arabic translation can be found in Appendix B.

2) SURVEY FORMAT

It was the intent from the beginning to administer the survey in both online and hard-copy versions. This was done in order to reach as broad a sample of Arab journalists as possible. There is both a physical and political aspect to this. There were obvious limits to the researcher's ability to administer or oversee surveys across the Arab world. In addition, survey research is highly constrained in many Arab countries. That is particularly true when dealing with either political issues or the media. Some countries ban surveys entirely or impose draconian regulations. Where a researcher may not be able to physically administer a survey, participants are able to receive information about the survey via email and log

onto the survey site, thus bypassing official sanctions. In addition, the researcher found that some participants perceived that Internet-based surveys provided them with an added layer of anonymity.

3) VALIDITY OF ONLINE SURVEYS

The online aspect of this survey has been paired with the administration of a paper-and-pencil version. Such a pairing is recommended by researchers who take a cautious view of online surveys. However, even those researchers concede that it is today generally accepted that "proof of concept that on-line and off-line tests can be equivalent has been established, so it is no longer a major research priority"⁹³⁸ and "Internet research is inherently no more risky than traditional observational, survey, or experimental methods."⁹³⁹ Epstein and Klinkenberg concluded that "because research has demonstrated that translating a measure into a computerized format does not necessarily change its reliability and validity, new Internet-based investigations need not be so focused on demonstrating the equivalency of paper-and-pencil instruments to computerized versions that are identical in every other way."⁹⁴⁰

The *State of the News Media* survey conducted by the Pew Research Center, which is one of the measures being used for comparative purposes in this study, was carried out through both telephone and online questionnaires.⁹⁴¹ Likewise, one of the leading US survey research firms, Zogby International, conducts many of its highly respected polls using a combination of telephone/face-to-face and online interviews.⁹⁴²

4) SURVEY INFRASTRUCTURE

Various options were considered for the survey infrastructure. Ten different available survey tools were considered (Appendix 3). Conversations were held with the University of Michigan's online team, which proposed to build a turn-key system. The challenge became creating an infrastructure that combined all of the key elements needed for this survey, most critical among them the ability to mount a survey in right-to-left Arabic script. The draft survey included open-ended responses, which added an additional complication; some services were able to handle right-to-left script in the questions themselves but not in responses. As a result, open-ended questions were eliminated and lists

of options for respondents to rank were included instead for questions such as “Greatest Threat” to the Arab world.

Another factor in the selection was the fact that it was very important that the infrastructure automatically saved responses. Some systems saved once the survey was completed and submitted, others as each page was completed, and still others as the question was answered. Given that a high dropout rate was anticipated as participants reached what might be considered more controversial questions (an expectation that was borne out), it was vital that the responses be saved as they were completed. The University of Michigan team endeavored to build such a site, but ultimately failed to resolve the right-to-left script issue. Several other extant infrastructures were tested, but each failed to live up to their promises. Ultimately, an infrastructure known as SurveyMonkey.com was selected. Despite initial claims, it eventually proved unable to handle Arabic script responses to the open-ended questions (the results were gibberish), so those questions were transformed into multiple choice, based on the predominant responses in the comparison Arab public surveys that were being replicated.

5) PROTECTION OF SUBJECTS

Complete anonymity was assured. Though it would have been useful to have a record of participants for later follow up surveys, a decision was made not to request names. The online infrastructure was set in a way to avoid planting “cookies” or collect email addresses. The infrastructure did record IP addresses, but only the most sophisticated technology, beyond the means of the researcher, would allow the source to be tracked back to a specific computer (the IP addresses did allow a record to be created of the countries from which online participants were logging in, providing a more complete geographic profile of the respondents). The only identifying questions included those that asked reporters to indicate whether they were based in the Middle East, South or Southeast Asia or the West, to allow the possibility of comparing geographic influences. An informed consent declaration was included on the first page of the survey, both in hardcopy and online (see Appendix 1 and 2).

6) HUMAN SUBJECT APPROVAL

A request for approval to conduct human research, including a report on proposed methodology and copy of the draft survey, was submitted to, and eventually approved by, the University of Michigan's Institutional Review Board.

6) ADMINISTRATION OF HARD-COPY SURVEYS

Journalists in each of the target countries were hired to both administer the survey and to encourage fellow reporters to take part in the online version. The use of "natives" of a given culture to administer questionnaires "in order to gain entry into internal networks" off-limits to foreign researchers is common in anthropology and international survey research.⁹⁴³ In this case, the efficacy of such an approach was relevant both in terms of Arab culture and the closed professional culture of journalism, in which there exists a strong *esprit d'corps*, or in-group solidarity. It is recognized that such solidarity enhances group acceptance.⁹⁴⁴ In addition, local-hires were able to conduct survey work in places where the candidate could not (e.g. Syria). However, this did create a different set of issues. In an ideal world, the survey would have been administered in a completely anonymous manner; survey administrators reading out the questions to participants whom they did not know and writing down the answers.⁹⁴⁵ Given the issues of "native" access noted above, this was not possible. In most cases, those administering the survey knew the participant personally or professionally. As a result, participants were given the survey to complete themselves and provided with an envelope into which it could be sealed to provide some level of anonymity, should they so choose.

7) COOPERATION OF ARAB MEDIA OUTLETS

The candidate's ties with many Arab journalists who are now in senior editorial positions date back more than 25 years. That, as well as his current high-profile position as director of the leading television journalism training center in the Arab world, made possible direct access to leading decision-makers in the industry. As a result, he was able to secure the cooperation of the most influential pan-Arab media outlets, including Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, Al-Hayat, Asharq Al-Awsat, and Al-Quds Al-Arabi, as well as the Washington, D.C. Arab Journalists Association. This was arranged during visits to the Al-Jazeera newsroom in Doha, the Al-Arabiya newsroom in Dubai, and the headquarters of the three

pan-Arab dailies, all based in London. An earlier visit to Washington secured the cooperation of the US-based group. These organizations either provided email lists for their reporters/members or agreed to send out an email from a top editor with an embedded link to the survey site encouraging staff to take part. The discussions with the Saudi-owned pan-Arab newspaper *Asharq al Awsat* resulted in agreement that the survey would not include a question specifying the news organization for which the participant worked. This was to alleviate the editor's concern that we would try to contrast his staff with those of the paper's competitors. Likewise, it was agreed that we would track whether the journalist was based in the Arab world or abroad, since he felt (and the researcher hypothesized) that Arab journalists based in the West would espouse values closer to those of Western journalists than their colleagues living in the Arab world.

8) TESTING OF SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The candidate tested the survey instrument among Arab journalists prior to general distribution. An early draft version was shown to several top editors, who suggested minor amendments but generally approved of its structure. A more extensive test was conducted in the fall of 2005 at the European Commission's EuroMed and the Media conference at the Dead Sea in Jordan. Copies were distributed to approximately 40 senior Arab journalists from across the region. It produced significant negative feedback related both to political questions and those involving religion, particularly those related to standard markers of religiosity.⁹⁴⁶

"Why do you want to ask me about the American occupation of Iraq? About what is terrorism?" Nouredine Fridhi, Brussels correspondent for the MBC Group, challenged me. "Drink Wine? Why do I drink wine? Why I go to the mosque? If I say I don't like Bush or bin Laden, does that mean I think the two are the same?" continued Fridhi, who I had known for many years. "With all my friendship to you, I can tell to you this is a database for the Americans to have and record our concepts; how we are believing or not believing, thinking, etc."⁹⁴⁷

As a result of that and similar responses, a number of questions were eliminated and the order of the survey was restructured to put what appeared to be the most controversial questions toward the end in order to gather potential data prior to expected drop-outs (in

many cases, this did not help with the hard-copy versions, since some reporters skimmed the questions before deciding whether to answer. See later section on unique challenges of the survey).

9) SURVEY VERSIONS

Several iterations of the survey instrument were produced. The order of questions in instruments labeled A, B, C and D were varied. Arabic and English versions of each were created (translations were checked, double-checked and back-translated for accuracy). When the online infrastructure was built, 13 different databases were created. Four were dedicated to the pan-Arab media (one of each letter-versions); four for “national” media, e.g. media serving individual – rather than pan-Arab – audiences (one each of the letter-versions); four in English (one each of the letter versions); and one specifically designed to track graduates of the television journalism program run by the candidate (for internal purposes unrelated to the dissertation).

The online tool was set up in such a way that participants given the link for the pan-Arab survey would be randomly directed to versions A, B, C or D of the pan-Arab version, participants given the link to the “national” survey would be randomly directed to versions A, B, C, or D that recorded their responses in separate databases from those answering the pan-Arab version, etc. The goal was to allow the possibility of cross-comparisons of the various participant groups by the candidate or later researchers doing secondary analysis of the data (e.g. pan-Arab journalists vs. those working for “domestic” news organizations, or Middle East-based journalists vs. those based in Europe or the US, about whom there has been little scholarly investigation beyond a few works produced before the Arab satellite revolution⁹⁴⁸).

10) DEFINITIONS

In their landmark study, Kovach and Rosenstiel defined journalism as “the system societies generate to supply ... news.”⁹⁴⁹ But in an electronic age in which humankind is bombarded by information from a plethora of sources, journalism is “disappearing inside the larger world of communications.”⁹⁵⁰

This is a study of journalists; it is thus imperative to define what constitutes a journalist. It is not as simple a task as might be imagined. Kovach and Rosenstiel spent two years, conducted two surveys of journalists (from which the annual *State of the News Media* report grew), held 21 public forums attended by 3,000 people and heard testimony from more than 300 journalists, all in an effort to determine how journalists themselves define their role. It is a complex issue; even more so in a region such as the Arab world, where the profession itself is in the throes of revolutionary change. For their survey series, Weaver et al defined journalists as those who have “responsibility for the preparation or transmission of news stories or other timely information – all full-time reporters, writers, correspondents, editors, news announcers, columnists, photo-journalists and other news people.”⁹⁵¹

For the purposes of this work, we built on that definition to include part-time and freelance reporters, since a significant portion of Arab journalists work for more than one news organization in an effort to earn enough money to survive. The definition of journalism for the purposes of this survey thus became individuals whose primary source of income and/or professional avocation is the production of articles for Arab media outlets. “Arab” is defined as a national of one of the 22 member states of the Arab league.

11) SELECTION OF MEDIA

There were two criteria for selection of target media for the sample. The top priority was the main pan-Arab print and television media. Surveys were distributed to all of those outlets (below). On the national level, the six-to-eight largest circulation newspapers in each country were the primary target. The practical issue of access then became a major factor. Working within the above parameters, the journalist-researchers drew on their network of contacts to gain access to the target media. This was not always successful, given politics, the pressure of news events (the conflict in Lebanon for example), local restrictions (e.g. Syria), personal relationships and other factors.

Certain journalists were purposely excluded from the sample, among them journalists working for avowedly Islamic news organizations. Such outlets are overtly committed to the propagation of Islam and are thus not representative of the majority of major media organs.⁹⁵² The inclusion of employees of such outlets would likely compromise the effort to create a portrait of the “mainstream” of Arab journalism. Nor did the survey

seek out writers contributing to the estimated 63,000 blogs in the Middle East.⁹⁵³ There exists no widely-accepted definition of a “journalist” in the New Media context, since anyone with a computer has the ability to establish a site and produce content. Web sites and blogs have become the modern equivalent of the soapbox at Hyde Park Corner. While audiences are increasingly seeing bloggers as a journalistic force,⁹⁵⁴ various studies have shown that there is a lack of professionalism, a lack of quality and standards, uneven credibility and a preponderance of opinion rather than factual reporting on New Media outlets.⁹⁵⁵ In the West, bloggers run the gamut from the editors of *Foreign Policy* magazine to 14-year old girls; likewise in the Arab world. Even among the serious, politically-focused bloggers, many share the sentiments of Sandmonkey, the *nom d’web* of an Egyptian blogger, who told this writer, “I’m not a journalist and I don’t want to be. I’m a guy with an opinion.”⁹⁵⁶ However, as noted earlier, the Arab media is in the throes of change. The Internet is one of those theaters of change. Chafing at restrictions in the traditional media, some journalists are turning to the web, which *Asharq Al-Awsat* writer Souad Groohs has called the venue for the “victory over censorship.”⁹⁵⁷ The growing number of online reporters and bloggers imprisoned across the Arab world⁹⁵⁸ is evidence that the comment might be somewhat hyperbolic, but the fact remains that many journalists, publishing both under their own names and under pseudonyms, find a degree of freedom online absent in the traditional media. In some cases, as in Egypt, traditional journalists are both authoring blogs and tipping other bloggers to stories they cannot cover, so that they can then report that the blogger reported the story, creating safe ground for themselves. The lines between “traditional” journalism and “new media” thus blur. Therefore, while Internet journalists were not directly sought out for participation, it is likely that some of those taking part write for both tradition and web outlets.

The sole exception to this approach was Syria, where “journalists, writers and human rights activists are brutally repressed by a formidable security apparatus.”⁹⁵⁹ This situation means that the Internet has become the sole venue for journalism with even a modicum of independence beyond the viselike grip of the government. Approximately 25 online sites dedicated to political news – as opposed to opinion – currently exist in Syria.⁹⁶⁰ They are operated by a group of part-time would-be journalists scattered around the country who both write for their own sites and cooperate on national stories, such as coverage of

parliamentary elections, serving as a de facto national news network, aggregating their content on the largest of the sites, All4You.com. Though few have an education in journalism, they are aggressively dedicated to producing factual reportage and disdain those who simply post their own opinions online. “The Internet is the only window for Syrians to feel freedom of speech. If I could get a license, I would print a newspaper, but I cannot,” said Ayman Nour, editor of All4Syria.com. “They [online writers elsewhere in the Arab world] can get a license, but all they want to do is blog.”⁶¹ For this reason, Syrian web journalists were consciously included in the sample, while most others were excluded.

12) DISTRIBUTION

As noted above, direct coordination took place with the top editors of all of the dominant pan-Arab news organizations. For media serving purely “domestic” Arab audiences in individual countries, the six-to-eight largest news organizations were identified. Several approaches were then taken.

- 1) The candidate sent an email, in both English and Arabic, to his extensive list of Arab journalist contacts (see sample size below) across the region, filtering out those who did not work for major news organizations. The email contained a link to the national iteration of the survey and included a request that the reporter also forward the email to his own colleagues. A follow up was sent a month later.
- 2) The Egyptian research assistant had worked in the Mubarak presidential campaign during the 2005 elections and had possession of the campaign’s media email list. This was used to distribute the survey to 200 domestic Egyptian journalists. The involvement of the research assistant at this level did not compromise data security in that, a) respondents used the online infrastructure and did not send responses via email, and b) other Egyptian journalists were included in the candidate’s own email distribution which meant that the universe of respondents was larger than just the assistant’s list (and expanded to an unknown degree via forwarding).
- 3) Hardcopy distribution took place through several means. The Egyptian journalist-research assistant (who was compensated) and a fellow journalist sought access to

the newsrooms of the largest Egyptian domestic media outlets. In addition, they distributed copies to other journalistic colleagues who worked for major news organizations as defined above.

- 4) Journalist-researcher assistants in Lebanon, Syria, Morocco, Bahrain and Yemen were identified through the personal contacts of the candidate and the Egyptian research assistant. They were enlisted to carry out the survey in their home countries, using the same criteria. Those in Lebanon, Syria and Morocco were paid a small stipend. In the end, the journalists in Bahrain and Yemen concluded it would not be safe to distribute hard-copy surveys so they distributed email links to the online infrastructure to select colleagues.
- 5) In fall 2006, the Egyptian research assistant was dispatched to the United Arab Emirates where he distributed hard-copy surveys to major news organizations and individual reporters in both Dubai and Abu Dhabi.
- 6) An email distribution was made to graduates of the graduate television journalism program at the American University in Cairo in the fall of 2006.

13) TIMELINE

Distribution of links to the online survey began in early May 2006. The final hard-copy versions of the survey were returned in February 2007. One major hindrance involved Lebanon. Distribution of the surveys in the summer of 2006 was impeded by the outbreak of the Israel-Hezbollah conflict. Ongoing disruptions, including a series of assassinations and the resulting political crisis made it difficult both for the local reporter-researcher to distribute the surveys and to get the attention of journalists long enough to have them complete the instrument.

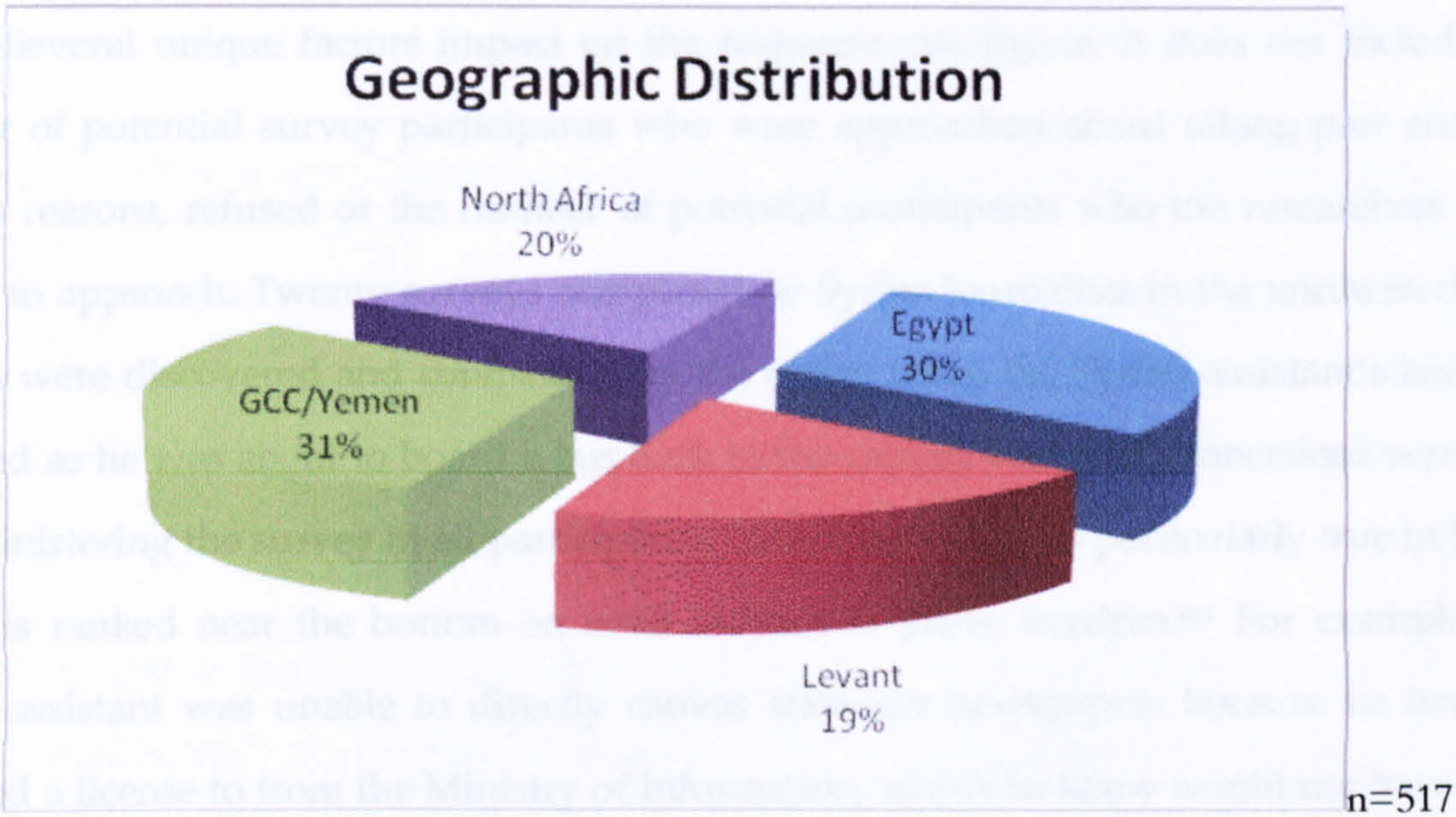
Sample Size: The survey garnered an aggregate of 517 individual responses, 186 via the online infrastructure and the balance in hard-copy surveys. In comparison, 435 editors were polled for the 2007 *Newsroom Barometer*, a global survey on the future of newspapers carried out by Zogby International for the World Association of Newspapers and Reuters,⁹⁶² and 547 US journalists and news media executives were interviewed for the widely-cited *State of the News Media* survey carried out in 2004 by the Pew Research Center for the People and

the Press on behalf of the Project for Excellence in Journalism.⁹⁶³ To put the relative size of the samples in context, based on national census figures, there are an estimated 116,148 full-time journalists in the US⁹⁶⁴ and 10,870 news organizations.⁹⁶⁵ Pew and Weaver therefore sampled 0.5 percent and 1 percent of US journalists respectively.

There are no reliable figures on the number of practicing journalists in the Arab world. However, the Egyptian Journalist Syndicate, de facto licensee for journalists, has approximately 6,000 members, and about another 500 journalists work outside the syndicate's jurisdiction. Egypt has a total population of 72.8 million and about 500 media outlets.⁹⁶⁶ That is roughly one-quarter of the Arab world's population and one-quarter of its media outlets. Using that ratio as a guideline and extrapolating the figure for Egyptian journalists across the region, by the most liberal estimate the total population of Arab journalists is unlikely to exceed 26,000. Our sample therefore represents approximately 2 percent of the total journalist population.

A total of 738 copies of the paper-and-pencil survey were physically distributed in five countries (Egypt, United Arab Emirates, Syria, Lebanon and Morocco). Of those, 383 were completed and returned, for a response rate of 51 percent, with a broadly even distribution across regions (Figure 1). Another 20 completed surveys were confiscated by Syrian authorities (see below). A link to the online survey was also included in the paper-and-pencil version, so it is possible some individuals exposed to the print version opted instead to complete the survey online.

FIGURE 3: GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION



Given the viral effects of email,⁹⁶⁷ it is impossible to determine how many Arab journalists were exposed to the online survey. Therefore, traditional response rates for the online portion cannot be provided. The survey was directly emailed to 634 individuals. Twenty-eight were returned with undeliverable addresses, for a total email distribution of 606. These included staff at the Al-Arabiya satellite channel and the related MBC network and journalists at *Al-Hayat*, *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*. Also included in the number are the 60 editorial employees at Al-Jazeera to whom the editor-in-chief of that channel distributed a link and about 25 staff at *Asharq Al-Awsat*, who were similarly emailed by their editor. As noted above, 186 individuals submitted online survey responses, for a known online response rate of approximately 31 per cent.⁹⁶⁸

For reasons cited above, a high dropout rate was expected, the pattern of which will be discussed in the results chapter. As such, it was decided that it would not be appropriate to automatically discard any incomplete surveys, as advocated by some survey researchers. Instead, responses were counted if the respondent completed the initial demographic information and at least the first question that followed, which asked about self-identity. This, in the view of the candidate, was the most essential question on the survey. In the end, 30 surveys which did not meet the above criteria were discarded, producing a net n=517.

14) UNIQUE CHALLENGES

Several unique factors impact on the response rate figure. It does not include the number of potential survey participants who were approached about taking part and, for various reasons, refused or the number of potential participants who the researchers were unable to approach. Twenty surveys completed by Syrian journalists in the northern city of Aleppo were discovered and confiscated by the police when the Syrian assistant's bag was searched as he was about to board a bus back to the capital. Personal connections were key to administering the survey in all participating countries. That was particularly true in Syria, which is ranked near the bottom on most indexes of press freedom.⁹⁶⁹ For example, the Syrian assistant was unable to directly canvas state-run newspapers because he had not obtained a license to from the Ministry of Information, which he knew would not have been forthcoming,⁹⁷⁰ but friends helped him gain unofficial access to various newsrooms, including that of *Al-Baath*, the newspaper of the ruling party. He had previously been warned by individuals close to state security that the survey could cause him problems because it involved outsiders trying to gauge Syrian attitudes.⁹⁷¹

In the UAE, there were several issues, among them the majority of journalists working there are not Emiratis. Of the balance, many are non-Arabs, primarily Pakistanis and Indians. Among the Emiratis – who the research assistant actively sought out – and other Arabs, primarily Egyptians and Palestinians, there was significant resistance and suspicion. Charges that the survey was a CIA or State Department attempt to collect intelligence were common in several countries, but one incident recounted by the Egyptian assistant in his after-action report underlined just how deep that suspicion ran. At issue was the name of the television journalism center the candidate heads at The American University in Cairo:

One of the Egyptian journalists participating in the survey in the United Arab Emirates asked if the Adham Center belongs to Sheikh Kamal Adham the head of Saudi Intelligence. I said the center was founded by a donation from Kamal Adham. In response the man said Kamal Adham was enlisted as one of the most cooperative Arab figures with the US intelligence. Also in the list was King Hussein of Jordan. The man reluctantly continued answering the

survey and then submitted it while asking about the Rockefeller institution and if it is of any kind military or related to the intelligence.⁹⁷²

Other surveys were completed, but then the participants had second thoughts:

In some instances, like in *Al-Bayan* newspaper, some journalists motivated others not to participate. In a number of cases they refused to return the survey after answering it because they felt the information included in the survey should not go in public, even if anonymously.⁹⁷³

Fully 200 of the surveys that had been left at news organizations in the UAE were returned untouched for a variety of reasons, from time demands and lack of interest to political reactions. The research assistant found that it was necessary for him to actually sit with reporters while they completed the form or they would be forgotten.

In some ways, the responses of those who refused to take the survey, or dropped out part-way through, were as interesting as the completed surveys themselves. The predominant concern centered on the idea that the project was a front for American intelligence. "This survey is serving and funded by the American side and we do not cooperate with such sides," one Syrian journalist wrote in the margins of the paper. "This is our concept and we do not give it up." While their bosses who knew and trusted the candidate endorsed the survey, many young journalists familiar with neither the candidate nor the research assistants were suspicious. Even personal connections were not always enough. A young Egyptian reporter who assisted in distributing the survey said she was repeatedly accused of working for the US State Department or the CIA. In the UAE, the lead Egyptian assistant reported, "The majority of the comments were about my belonging to an unspecified intelligence agency." In Syria, the chief editor of the newspaper *Baladna*, a youth tabloid launched in 2004, told the Syrian journal-researcher to "take this survey somewhere else. No one here can accept it." Claims that the survey was somehow serving US interests had been raised as survey work in Egypt was beginning in the summer of 2006. An Egyptian opposition newspaper, *Al-Wafd*, published a straightforward interview with this candidate and followed up several days later with a column attacking the project as a tool of the Bush administration.

Few such comments were heard in Morocco, where 80 percent of reporters approached agreed to complete the survey. While some participants observed that the survey focused more on political issues than journalism, the main objection was the absence of "North Africa" as an option in the question about region in which the participant was based. Even so, the journalist administering the survey there found he did not need to follow up to press reporters to participate, nor did he need to stand by while they completed it.

15) CODING AND ANALYSIS

The candidate created a codebook and database template for each of the four letter versions of the survey. Data from the online infrastructure was poured into these databases. Two Egyptian research assistants were employed to code the hard-copy versions. Each coded their assigned surveys and then traded so they could check each other's work. The candidate then adjusted the order of the responses for the randomized questions so that all data could be combined into a single database for analysis.

16) QUALITATIVE INTERVIEWS

The candidate carried out more than 60 qualitative interviews with Arab journalists to supplement and add texture to the quantitative results. Fifty-five of these interviews were directly quoted in the work. The majority of these interviews were conducted face-to-face, while a small number were conducted by telephone or email. Most were recorded with a digital audio device and later transcribed. These were supplemented by dozens of informal conversations with journalists, about which notes were made at the time or soon after. In many cases, initial interviews with a senior journalist took place either at conferences or in a newsroom. Some of these were also directly quoted. Several of these journalists then acted as "guide" for the researcher, providing access to other journalists from his/her publication and the journalistic community-at-large. The use of such guides is common in ethnographic and anthropological research.⁹⁷⁴ The collection method involved unstructured, open-ended interviews, which are known to provide a greater breadth of data than formal structured interviews that work from a prepared script.⁹⁷⁵ A core set of questions involving journalistic self-identity, political attitudes and views of the role of journalism in the modern Arab/Muslim world formed the heart of these interviews. However, the open-ended format

allowed for elaboration on aspects of particular concern to the individual journalist (e.g. an interview with the editor of a newspaper in the Emirates talked about his publication's avoidance of political issues).

17) COLLABORATION

The survey was carried out in association with Dr. Jeremy Ginges of the New School for Social Research in New York, who was, as noted above, a colleague of the candidate at the University of Michigan, where they were both members of the faculty when the project began. Dr. Ginges' role was largely confined to issues related to the survey instrument itself, including review of the survey structure, recommendations for randomization of questions to ensure validity in terms of survey research methodology, and insertion of his own questions *not discussed as part of this dissertation* (see Appendix 4 for statement from Dr. Ginges). It should be emphasized that this is *not* a survey methodology dissertation. The survey is being used in the context of analysis of the data, complimented by extensive qualitative research directly carried out by the candidate. While the candidate played a central role in development and administration of this survey, the analysis of even secondary data collected by other researchers is a common basis for Ph.D. dissertations in a variety of social science fields, including political science,⁹⁷⁶ therefore the involvement of others in methodological development and administration does not affect the primary analysis by the candidate.

CHAPTER XI: SURVEY RESULTS

"The Arabs are a natural group in the world."

IBN KHALDUN
*THE MUQADDIMAH*⁹⁷⁷

1) BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS OF RESPONDENTS

Journalists responding to the survey represented a geographic cross-section of Arab journalism, drawn from Egypt (29 percent); the Levant (18 percent); Saudi Arabia, the Gulf and Yemen (29 percent); and North Africa (19 percent); with the balance based in outside the region. Forty-five percent worked for daily newspapers and slightly more than 23 percent for television stations, with the rest spread among magazines, radio stations, news agencies weeklies and the Internet. Slightly more than half of those news organizations were privately-owned and just under a quarter owned by governments, with the balance owned by political parties, individuals or "other."

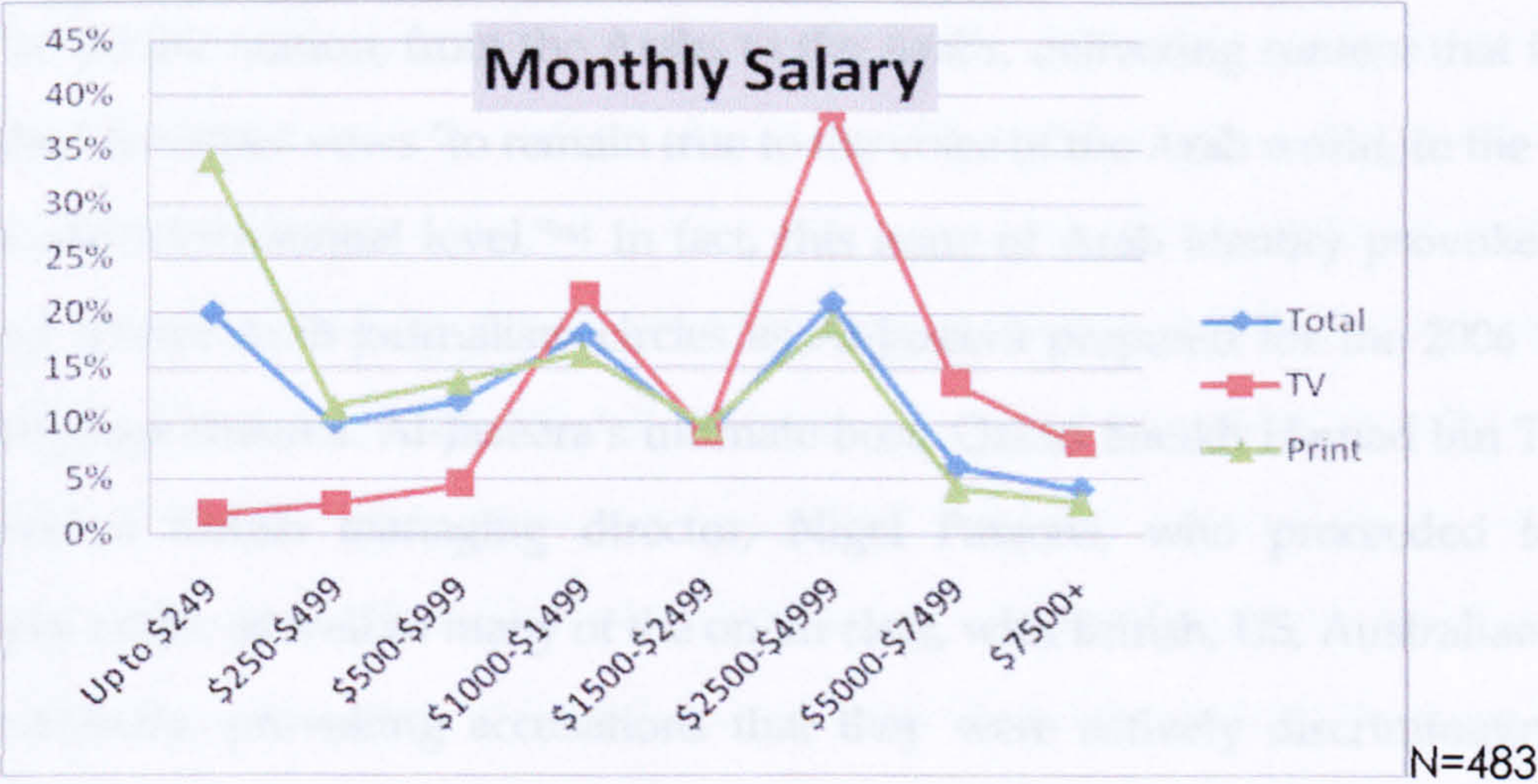
Roughly 65 per cent of the respondents described themselves as editors, 15 percent as reporters, nine per cent as assistant editors or producers, just under five percent as TV presenters, and just over six percent as "non-editorial."⁹⁷⁸ More than 70 percent of the respondents work full-time, 20 percent are freelancers and eight percent work for more than one news organization. Nine-two percent of respondents are based in the Arab world, with the balance in Europe and the US and one respondent each based in South and Southeast Asia as correspondents for news organizations in the Arab world.

Approximately 30 percent of respondents have been working in journalism for more than a decade, another 20 percent from five to ten years, just under a quarter from three to five years, and the remainder less than two years. Thirty-eight percent had a bachelor's degree and the same number had attended but not graduated from university; fifteen percent had a master's degree, 1.6 percent had a doctorate, while in contrast, six percent had graduated secondary school and 0.4 percent had only graduated from primary school. Of those who attended college, 61 percent took at least some journalism courses. While percent

of respondents had a journalism degree about the same number had no training before being hired as a journalist.

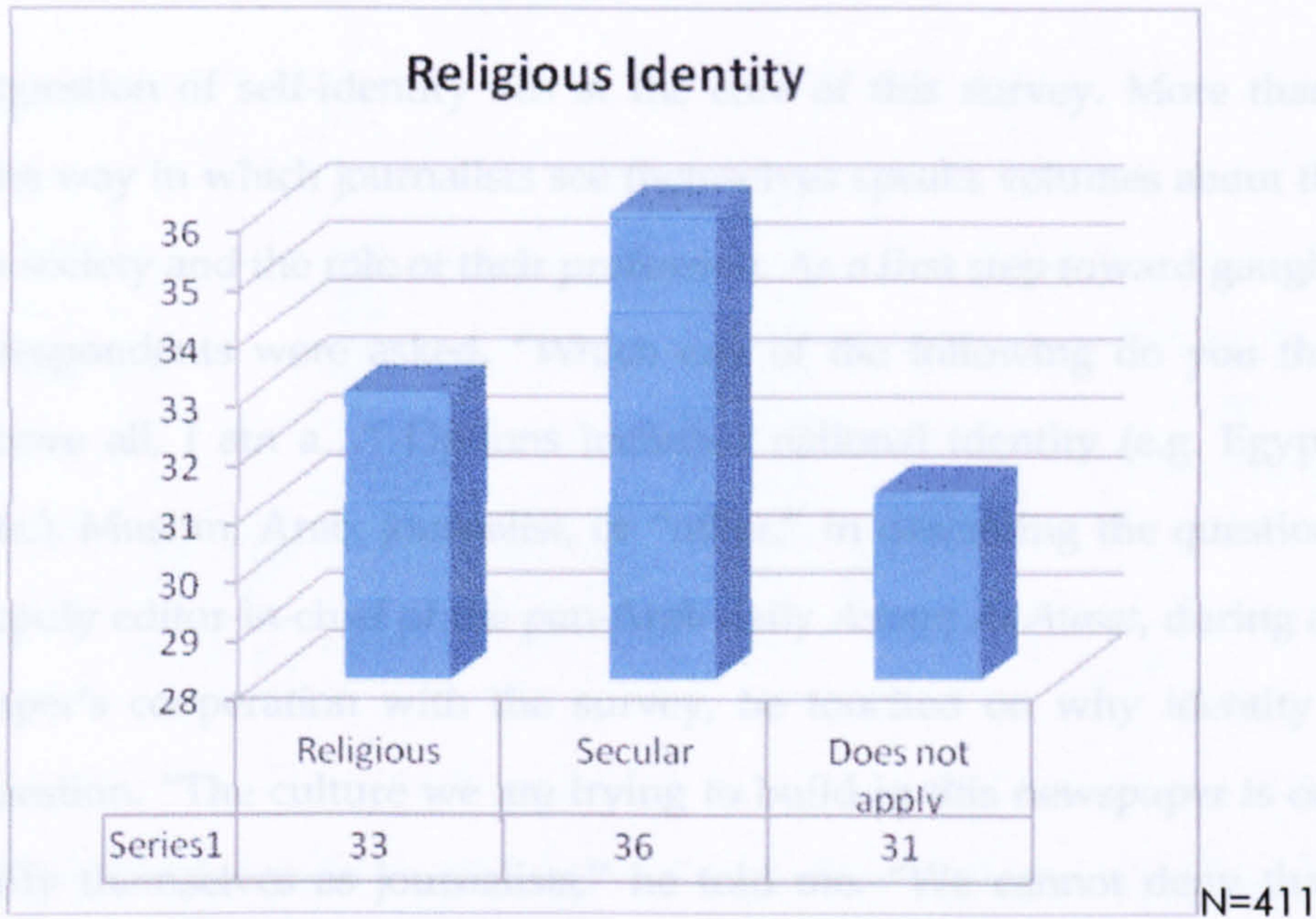
The journalists responding to the survey were overwhelmingly young. Three-quarters were 25-years old or younger. Sixty percent were male, half those sampled said they were married and about the same number had at least one child. Twenty percent of respondents earn less than \$250 per month and another ten percent said they make less than \$500 (Figure 4). It is worth pointing out that the original survey instrument listed \$100-\$249 as the lowest income range, but some respondents to the paper-and-pencil version of the survey wrote in the margin "under \$100." A total of more than 40 percent of respondents make less than \$1,000 per month, with another nine percent earning between \$1,500 and \$2,500. At the other end of the spectrum, 21 per cent reported making between \$2,500 and \$4,999 per month, with six percent in the \$5,000 to \$7,499 range and just under four percent earning more than \$7,500 per month. The responses reflected the vast gulf in income between the majority of working journalists in the Arab world and the elite, who primarily work for the pan-Arab satellite channels, with 61 percent of television journalist reporting salaries of \$2,500 per month or more. In contrast, 45 percent of those earning less than \$500 per month work in the print media.

FIGURE 4: MONTHLY SALARY



RELIGION: Almost 90 percent of respondents identified themselves as Muslims. Of the Muslims, when asked "Which best describes you?" 33 percent chose "religious," 36 percent "secular," and the balance selected "Does not apply" (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: RELIGIOUS IDENTITY⁹⁷⁹



2) ISLAM, ARAB NATIONALISM AND IDENTITY

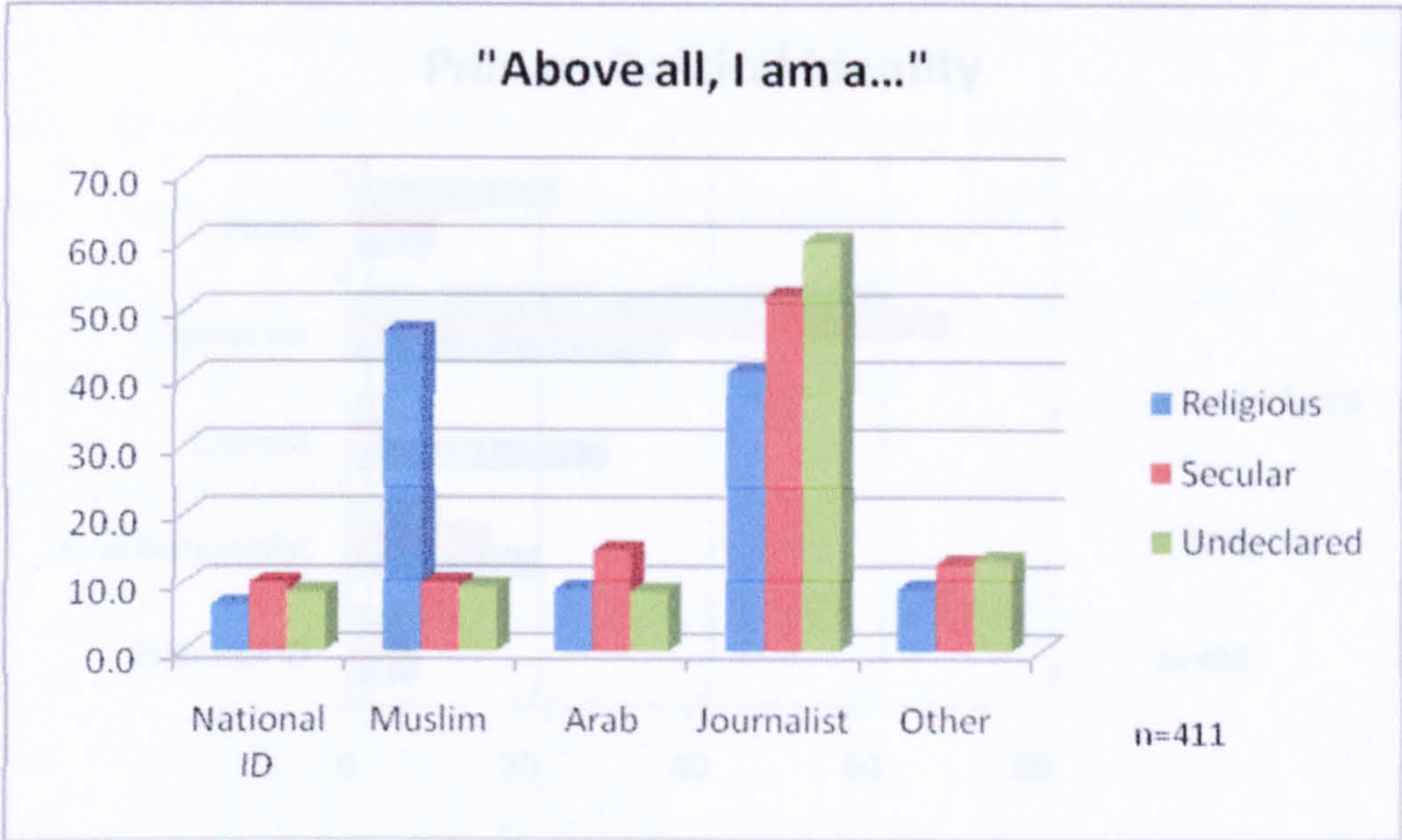
Like many Arab news organizations, the two major pan-Arab satellite television stations wear their Arab identity on their sleeve. Al-Jazeera’s mission statement defines it is an "Arab media service with a global orientation."⁹⁸⁰ Likewise, the mission statement of rival Al-Arabiya makes clear its self-view is also firmly embedded in the Middle East; declaring that it is "an Arabic station, from the Arabs to the Arabs, delivering content that is relevant to the Arabs." It further vows "to remain true to the voice of the Arab world, to the world, on a regional and international level."⁹⁸¹ In fact, this issue of Arab identity provoked a major controversy within Arab journalism circles as Al-Jazeera prepared for the 2006 launch its English-language channel. Al-Jazeera’s ultimate boss, Qatari Sheikh Hamad bin Thamer Al Thani, hired a British managing director, Nigel Parsons, who proceeded to fill the management ranks, as well as many of the on-air slots, with British, US, Australian and New Zealand nationals, provoking accusations that they were actively discriminating against Arabs. Attitudes were further polarized by Parsons’ comments about the new channel’s “global” perspective. "We might as well buy a new channel in the US," observed Mahmud Shammam, the Washington, D.C. bureau chief for the Arabic edition of *Newsweek*, at a media gathering in Doha. The comment prompted a roar of applause from staff members of the

Arabic channel. "[Al-Jazeera English] will not have Arabic characteristics and that's a big challenge."⁹⁸²

The question of self-identity lies at the core of this survey. More than any other barometer, the way in which journalists see themselves speaks volumes about their view of their place in society and the role of their profession. As a first step toward gauging that self-perception, respondents were asked, "Which one of the following do you think is most accurate? Above all, I am a..." Options included national identity (e.g. Egyptian, Saudi, Jordanian, etc.), Muslim, Arab, journalist, or "other." In describing the question to Osman Mirghani, deputy editor-in-chief of the pan-Arab daily *Asharq Al-Awsat*, during a meeting to enlist the paper's cooperation with the survey, he touched on why identity is such an important question. "The culture we are trying to build in this newspaper is one in which people identify themselves as journalists," he told me. "We cannot deny that this is an Arabic daily newspaper but the perception we are trying to build is that this is an international newspaper. We have a good mix of people from all over the Arab world. They start from saying I have this position or these religious traits. We say this is a newspaper, and people should behave in that way that the news people do and hence, if we can build that culture and then to identify themselves as journalists, then to a great degree we free their minds of the bias."⁹⁸³

In fact, almost 48 percent of those completing the survey chose, "Above all, I am a journalist," while the response, "Above all, I am a Muslim," came a distant second at 22 percent. Just under 11 percent said, "Above all, I am an Arab;" national identity (e.g. Egyptian, Jordanian, Saudi, etc.) was primary for 8.5 percent; and just under 11 percent chose "other". When cross-tabulated against religious self-identity, almost half (47 percent) of those who identified themselves as "religious" Muslims chose "Above all, I am a Muslim." In comparison, 52 percent of self-declared "secular" Muslims and 60 percent of those not declaring (hereafter referred to as "undeclared") chose "Above all, I am a journalist." That response was also selected by more than 3 percent of the self-declared religious Muslims (Figure 6).

FIGURE 6: PRIMARY IDENTITY



When asked what political philosophy best described them, more than 28 percent of “religious” Muslim journalists chose “Islamist” as their primary political identity (Figure 7). Significantly, however, a larger percentage (35 percent) of those self-described religious Muslims chose “Democrat.” This was also the overwhelming response among “secular” (68.5 percent) and undeclared journalists (61.4 percent). Interestingly, a larger portion of “religious” journalists chose “Arab nationalist” as their primary political identity (21.1 percent) than did “secular” journalists (15.1 percent) or undeclared (9.4 percent).

In terms of geographic identity, almost half of the “religious” journalists said they belong first to the Muslim world; however, another 33 percent of them linked their primary identity to the Arab world (Figure 8). The Arab world was also the primary geographic identity for the “secular” journalists (38 percent), 17 percent of whom chose “Muslim world” first. The figures were roughly the reverse for the undeclared journalists, 31 percent of whom identified first with the Muslim world, while 20 percent said Arab world came first. National and local identity was in the teens for both the latter groups, and in the single digits for the “religious” journalists.

FIGURE 7: POLITICAL IDENTITY

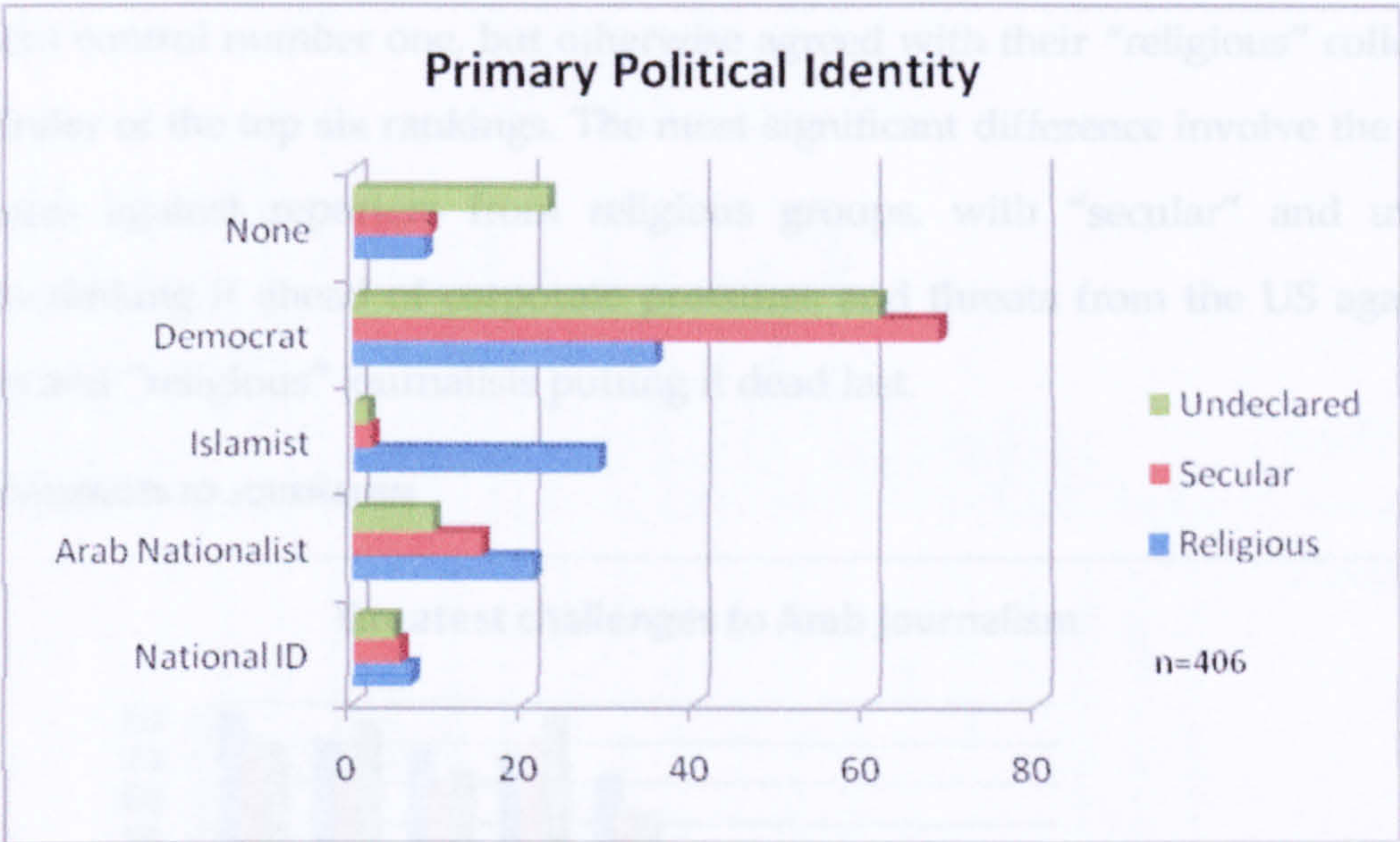
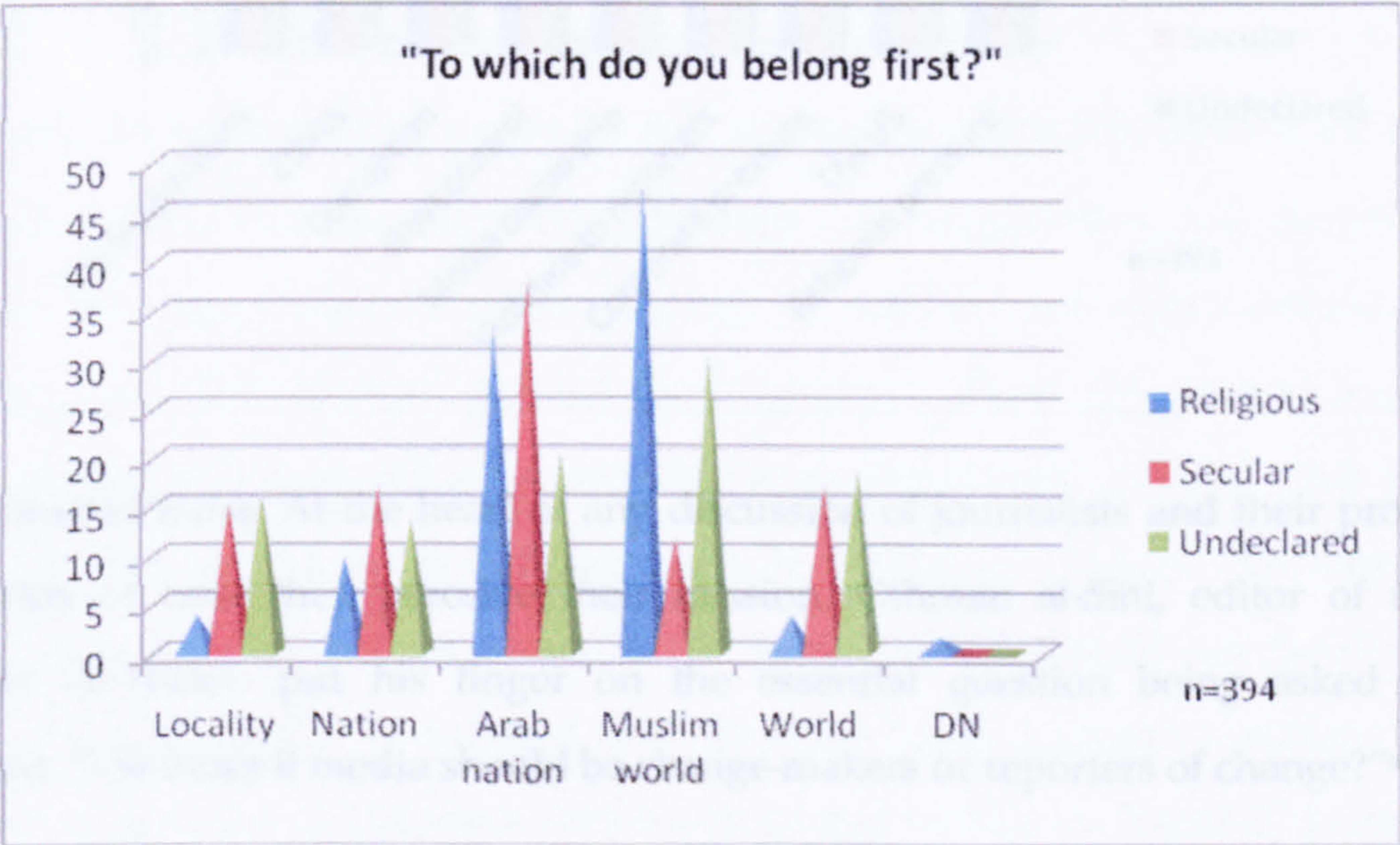


FIGURE 8: GEOGRAPHIC IDENTITY

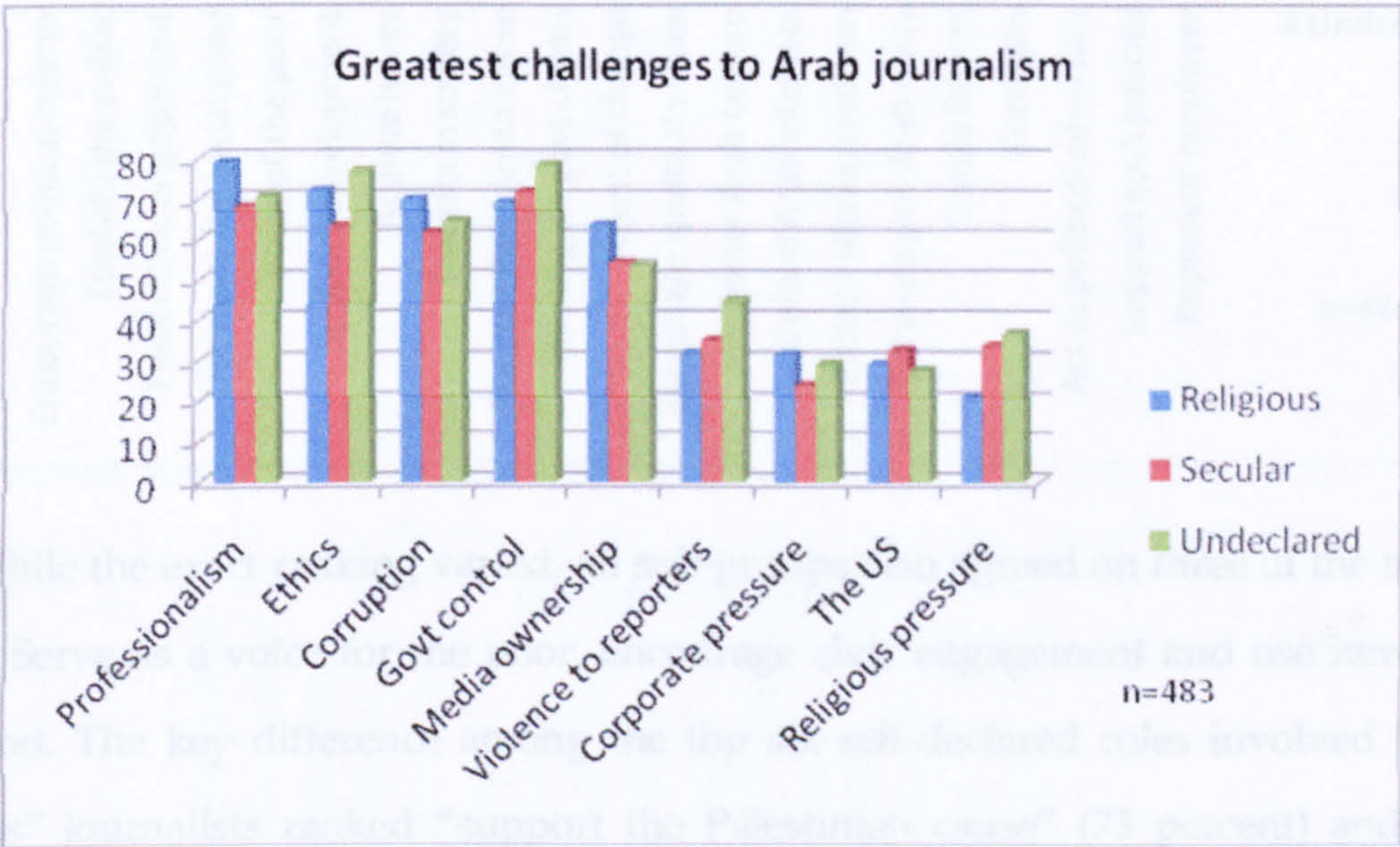


3) THE STATE OF ARAB JOURNALISM

Challenges: There was a large degree of unanimity among religious, secular and undeclared journalists on the question of the greatest challenges to Arab journalism today. Respondents were asked to rate a series of nine potential challenges on a 4-point Likert scale that ranged from “completely insignificant” to “most significant.” The three groups agreed on the top six challenges, with only marginal differences in the exact ranking (Figure 9). Religious journalists put the lack of professionalism among journalists as the top challenge, followed by (the lack of) journalistic ethics, corruption, government control of media, media

ownership, and violence against reporters. Self-described “secular” reporters ranked government control number one, but otherwise agreed with their “religious” colleagues on the remainder of the top six rankings. The most significant difference involve the challenge of pressures against reporters from religious groups, with “secular” and undeclared journalists ranking it ahead of corporate pressures and threats from the US against Arab journalists and “religious” journalists putting it dead last.

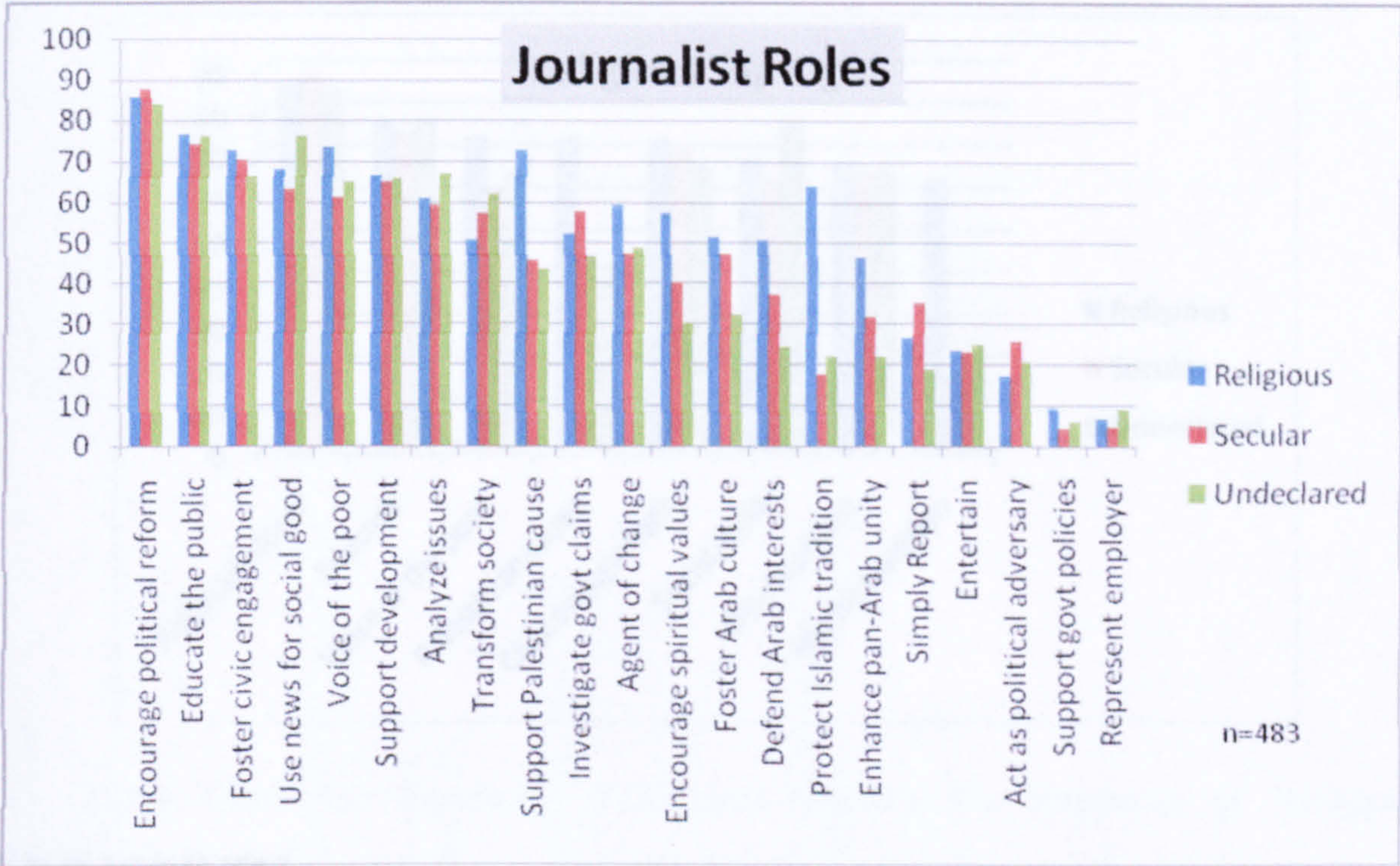
FIGURE 9: CHALLENGES TO JOURNALISM



Journalist Roles: At the heart of any discussion of journalists and their profession is the question of how they perceive their mission. Othman al-Sini, editor of the Saudi newspaper *Al-Watan*, put his finger on the essential question being asked in many newsrooms: “I wonder if media should be change-makers or reporters of change?”⁹⁸⁴

Respondents were asked to complete the following sentence, “It is the job of a journalist to...” They were then provided with a list of 21 journalistic roles and asked to rate them on a 4-point Likert scale from “completely insignificant” to “most significant.” By an overwhelming margin, all three sub-groups ranked “encourage political reform” as the most significant role for Arab journalists today, with a combined total of almost 86 percent of all journalists ranking it number one. Likewise, all three sub-groups ranked “educate the public” as the second-most important role (Figure 10).

FIGURE 10: JOURNALIST ROLES



While the exact ranking varied, all sub-groups also agreed on three of the remaining six roles: Serve as a voice for the poor, encourage civic engagement and use news for the social good. The key difference among the top six self-declared roles involved Palestine. “Religious” journalists ranked “support the Palestinian cause” (73 percent) and “protect Islamic tradition” (64 percent) as among the “most significant” roles of Arab journalists (Figure 11). This was in sharp contrast to the 46 percent of “secular” journalists and 43 percent of undeclared journalists who gave Palestine the same weight and the 17 percent of “secular” and 22 percent of undeclared who identified “protect Islamic traditions” as “most important.” In the place of Palestine, which was ranked twelfth by “secular” journalists and eleventh by undeclared respondents, and Islamic tradition (respectively 19th and 18th out of 21 roles), those two groups included “support national/regional development” and “transform society,” though each in a slightly different order (Figure 12 and Figure 13).

FIGURE 11: RELIGIOUS TOP 8

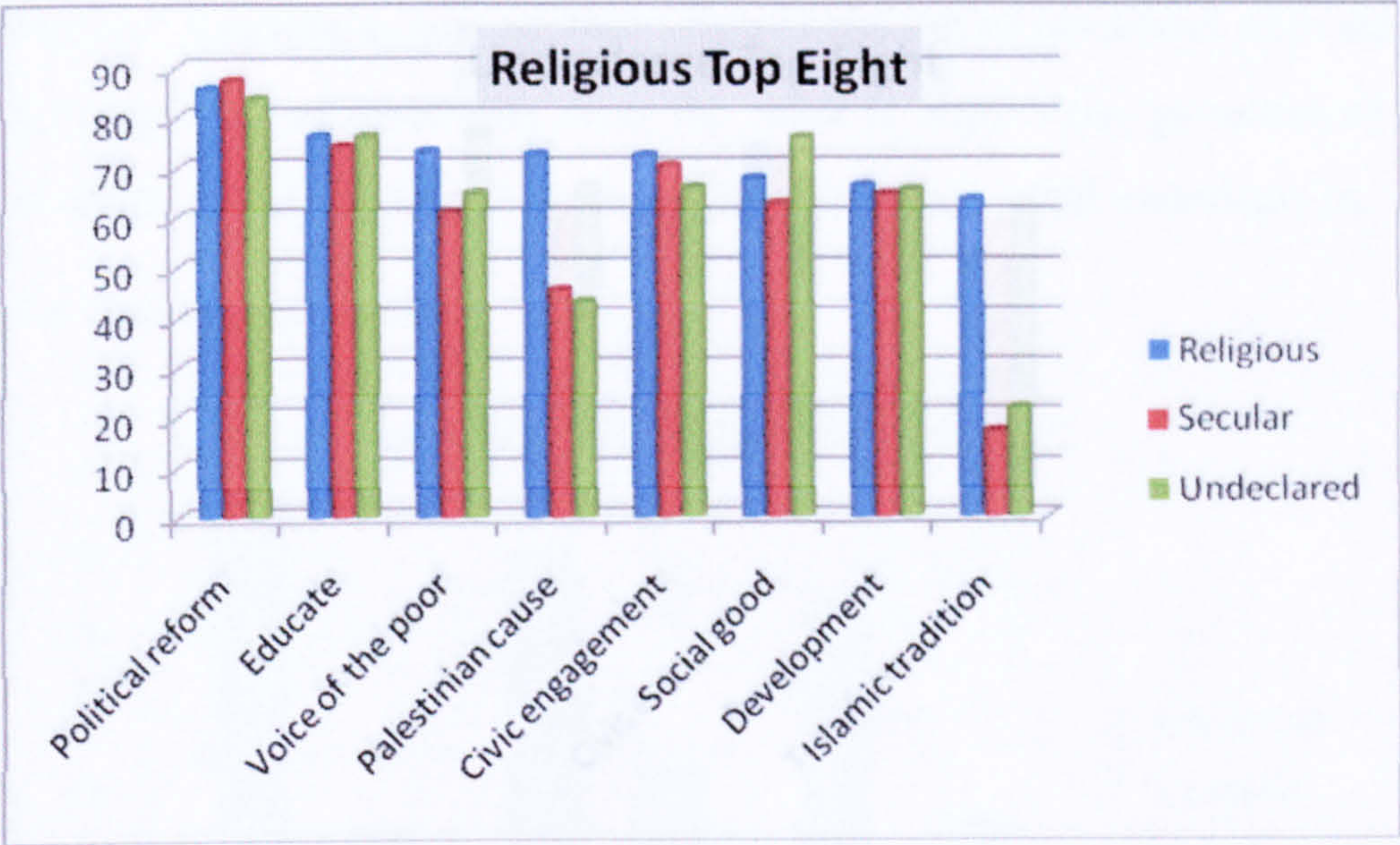


FIGURE 12: SECULAR TOP 8

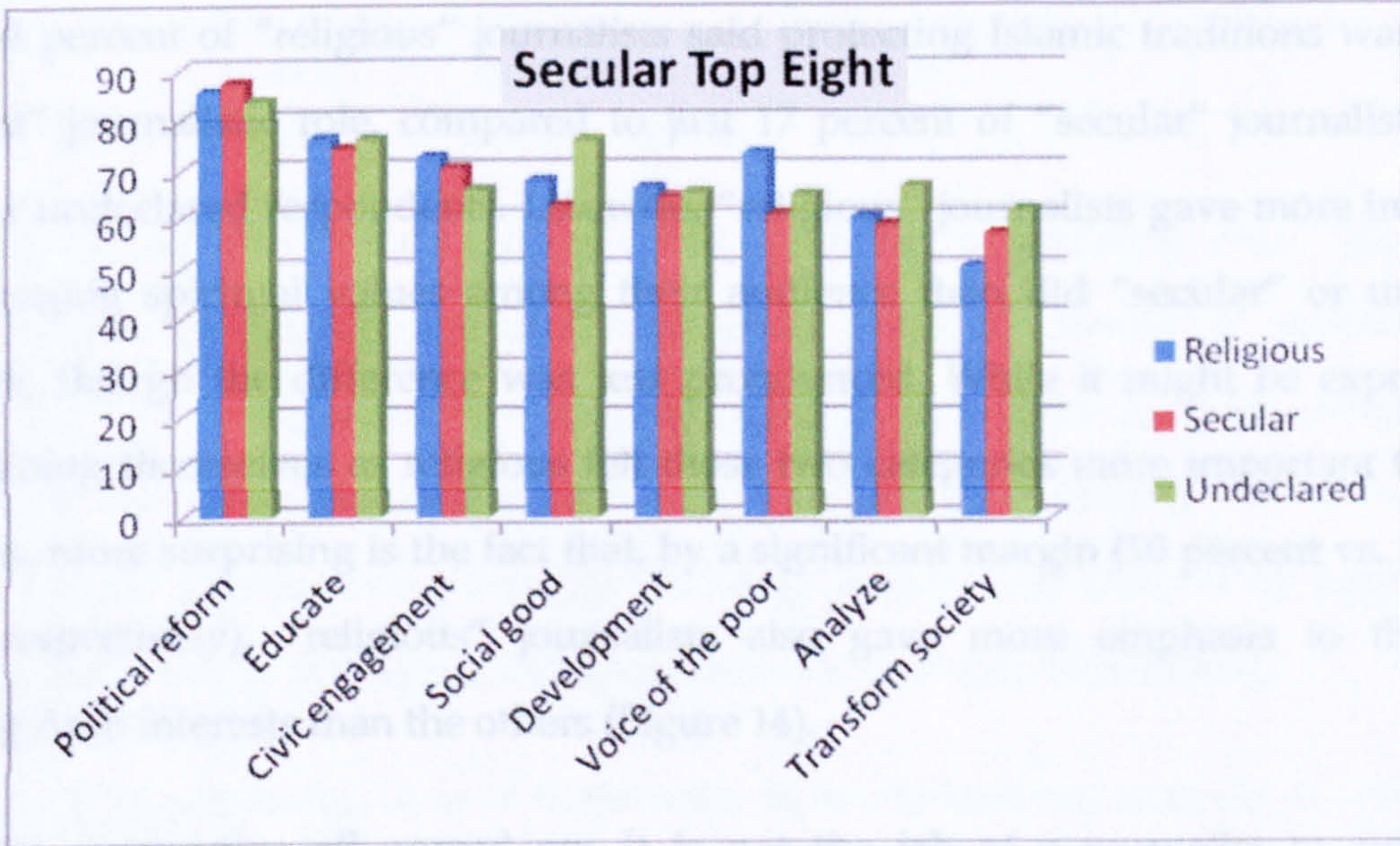
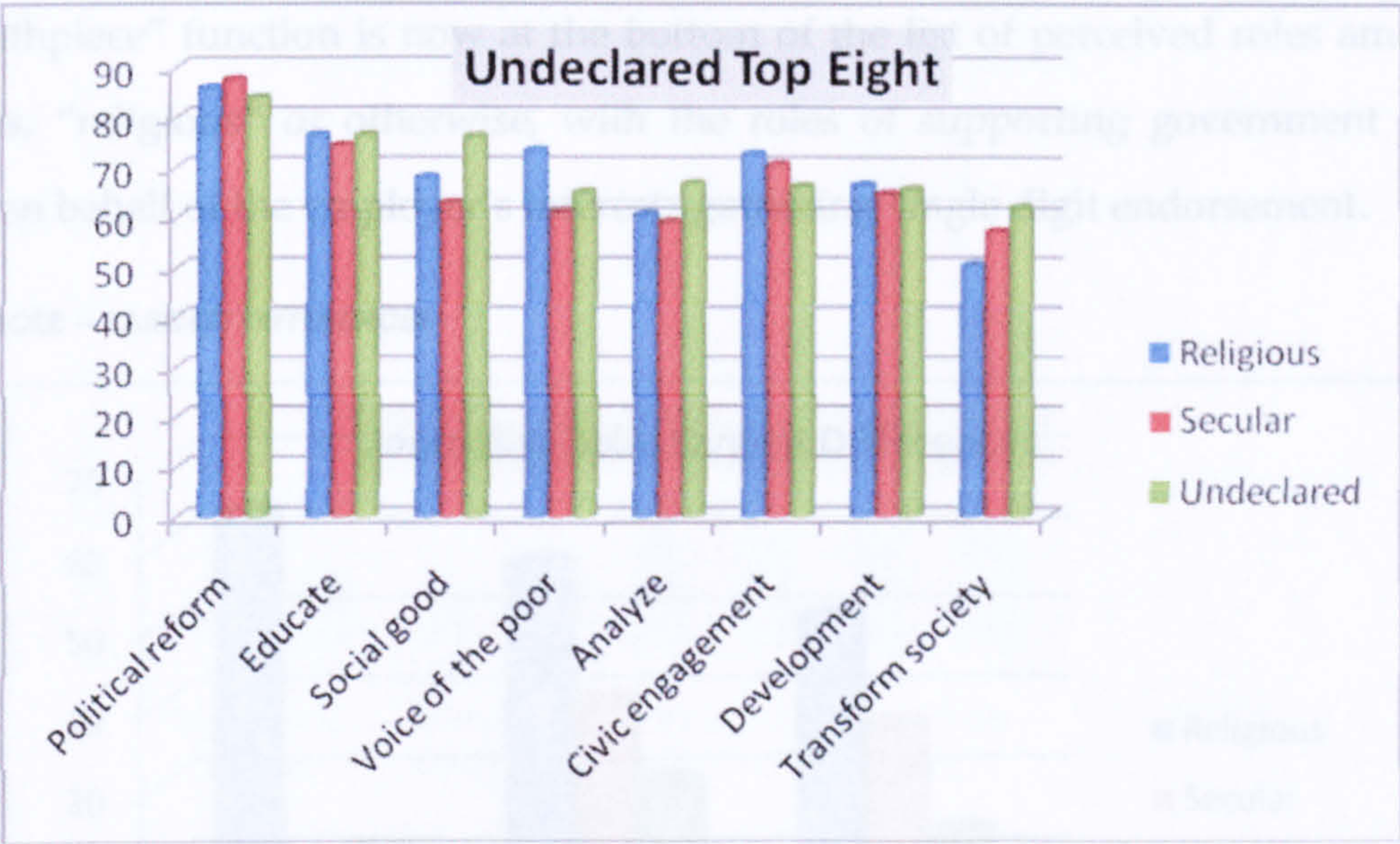


FIGURE 13: UNDECLARED TOP 8

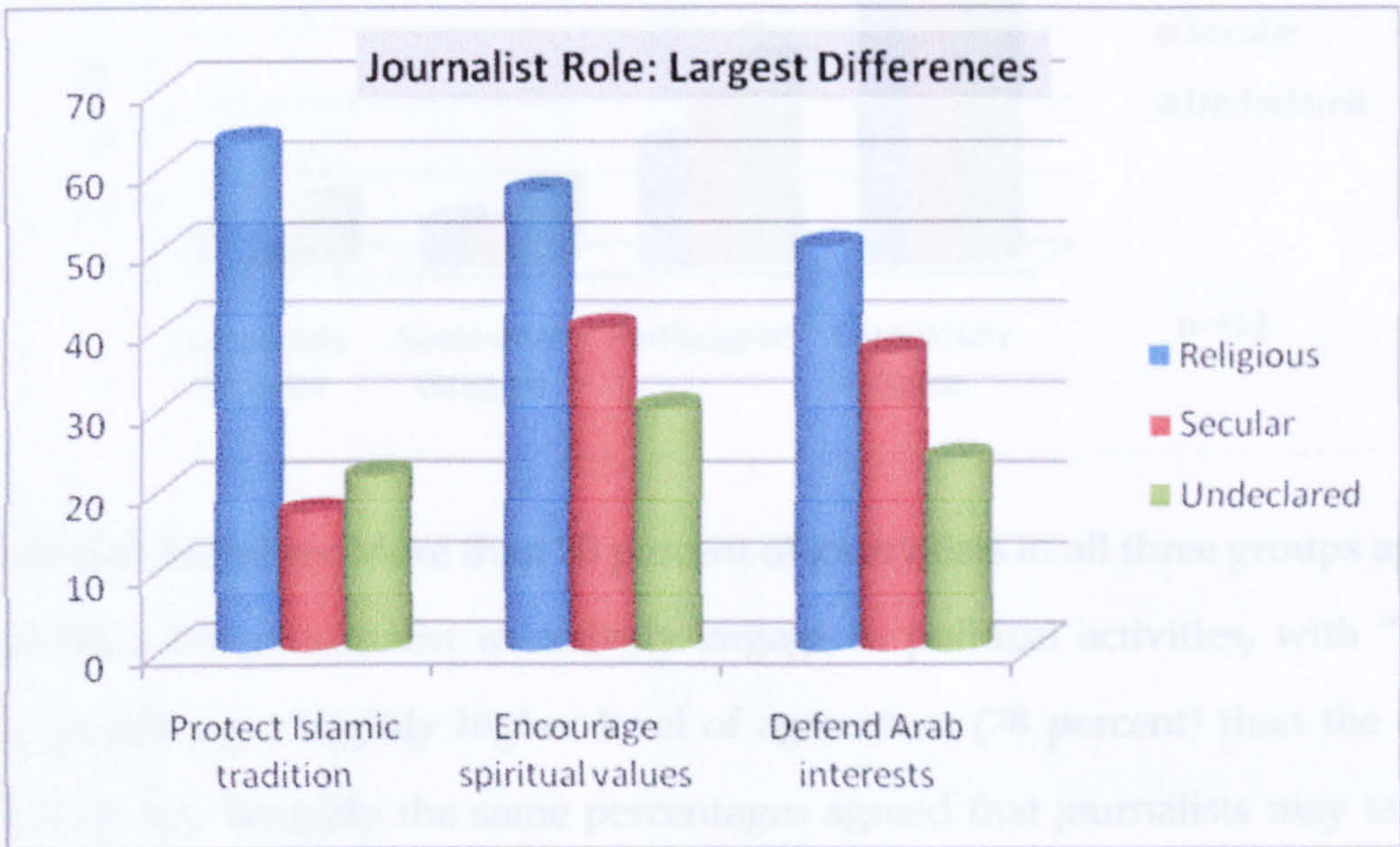


There were also significant differences between the responses of “religious” journalists and their “secular” and undeclared colleagues on three other journalistic roles. Almost 64 percent of “religious” journalists said protecting Islamic traditions was a “most significant” journalistic role, compared to just 17 percent of “secular” journalists and 22 percent of undeclared respondents. Likewise, “religious” journalists gave more importance to encouraging spiritual values among their audience than did “secular” or undeclared journalists, though the difference was less pronounced. While it might be expected that those defining themselves as religious felt those two categories more important than their colleagues, more surprising is the fact that, by a significant margin (50 percent vs. 37 and 24 percent respectively), “religious” journalists also gave more emphasis to the job of defending Arab interests than the others (Figure 14).

One perspective all agreed on: It is not the job of a journalist to support the government or the interests of their employer. As detailed in Chapter V, Rugh’s classic typology divided the Arab media into the Mobilization Press, Loyalist Press, Diverse Print Media, and Transitional Media. But in all of these, with the exception of Lebanon, serving as a mouthpiece for their respective governments was a key function.⁹⁸⁵ “Nongovernment sentiment was sometimes expressed, but only after it was filtered through trusted editors,” Rugh wrote.⁹⁸⁶ The survey reveals that, in the perception of Arab journalists, that role is dramatically changing. While the empirical reality in many Arab newsrooms, particularly in

the government-controlled media, is that governments and the powerful still call the shots, the “mouthpiece” function is now at the bottom of the list of perceived roles among Arab journalists, “religious” or otherwise, with the roles of supporting government policy or working on behalf of the employer’s interests garnering single digit endorsement.

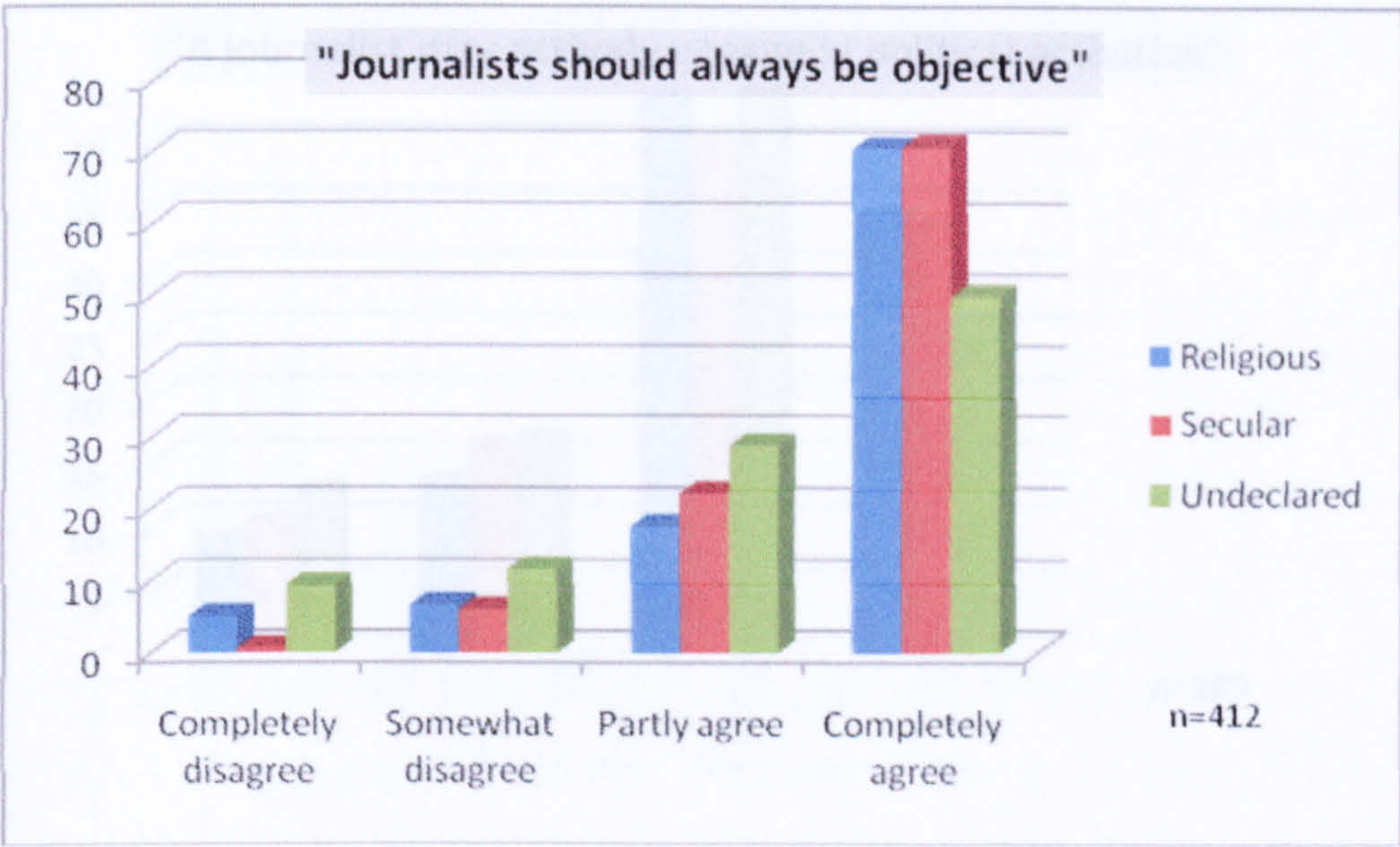
FIGURE 14: ROLE -- LARGEST DIFFERENCES



Objectivity: Al-Jazeera’s *Code of Ethics* states that its reporters must “[d]istinguish between news material, opinion and analysis to avoid the pitfalls of speculation and propaganda.”⁹⁸⁷ In many ways, how to achieve this ideal without the media being reduced to parroting official pronouncements is one of the great conundrums of journalism. Responses to the questions on this topic reflected the degree to which Arab journalists are struggling with the gap between normative aspiration and empirical reality.

On the controversial issue of objectivity, the overwhelming majority in all three sub-groups agreed that a journalist should always be objective (Figure 15). However, 94 percent of “religious” journalists, 92 percent of “secular” journalists and 92 percent of undeclared journalists said it was also the job of a reporter to “interpret” events. When it came to the question of whether journalists should include their own opinion in stories, all three groups were undecided. “Religious” journalists and the undeclared group were each split about 50-50, while a slight majority of “secular” reporters disagreed with the notion that reporters should include their own opinions.

FIGURE 15: OBJECTIVITY



Political Activism: More than 70 percent of journalists in all three groups agreed that it is permissible for a journalist to actively engage in political activities, with “religious” journalists exhibiting a slightly higher level of agreement (78 percent) than the other two groups (Figure 16). Roughly the same percentages agreed that journalists may take part in protest demonstrations (72 percent, 74 percent and 68 percent respectively). All three sub-groups were in agreement that satellite television has had a major impact on journalism in the Arab world.

Media Freedom: The Arab journalists exhibited conflicted attitudes toward the state of Arab media. On one level, they gave themselves high marks, with 90 percent of “religious,” 85 percent of “secular” and 81 percent of undeclared journalists agreeing with the statement, “My news organization is doing an outstanding job.” However, the uneven and uncertain state of media reform across the region was reflected in the fact that about 50 percent of each group said they only “partly agree” that the Arab media is becoming freer, (Figure 17), and 75 percent of “religious” journalists, 60 percent of “secular” journalists and 71 percent of undeclared partly or completely agreed that, as an individual, they were “personally freer to do my job.”

FIGURE 16: POLITICAL ACTIVITIES

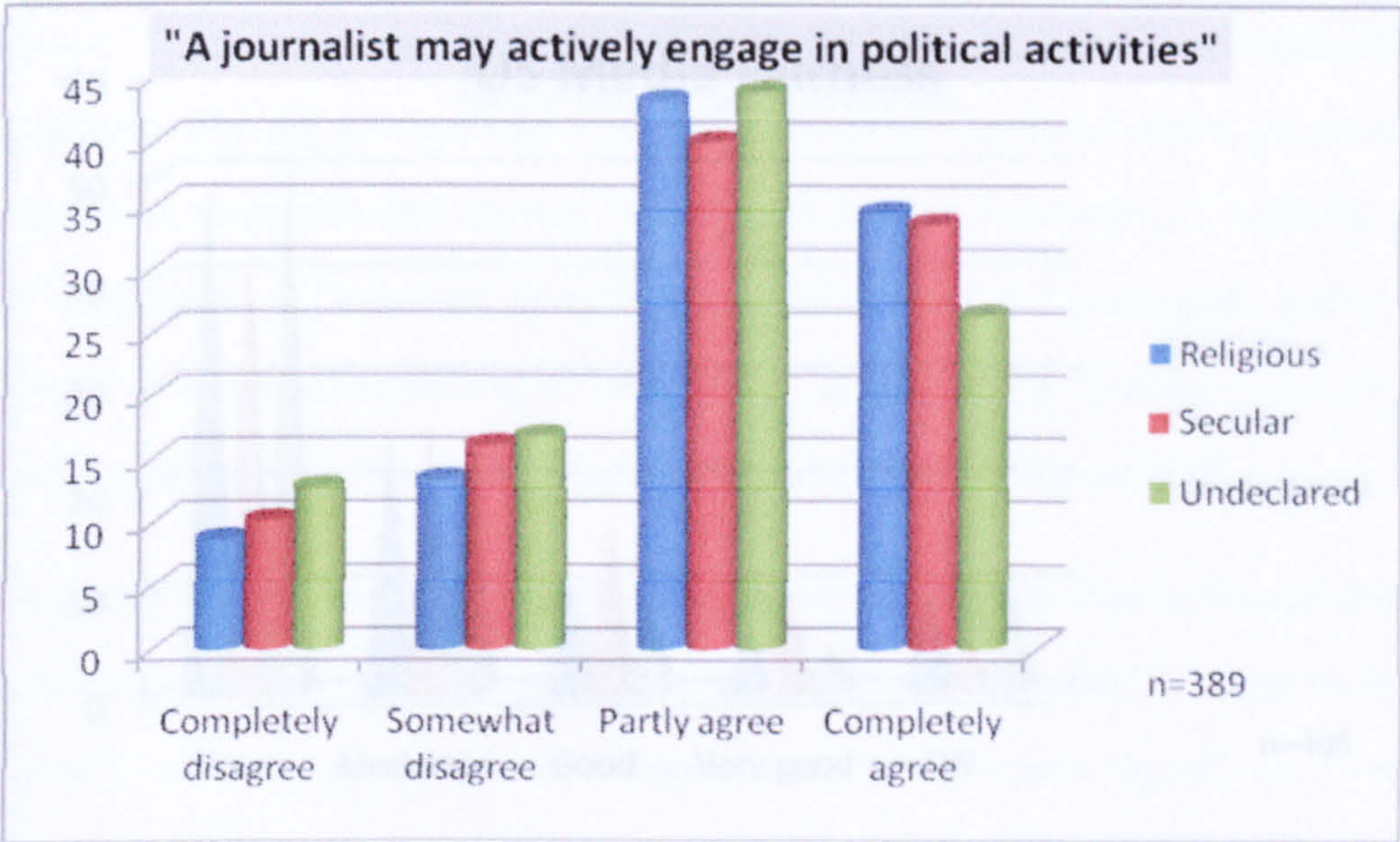
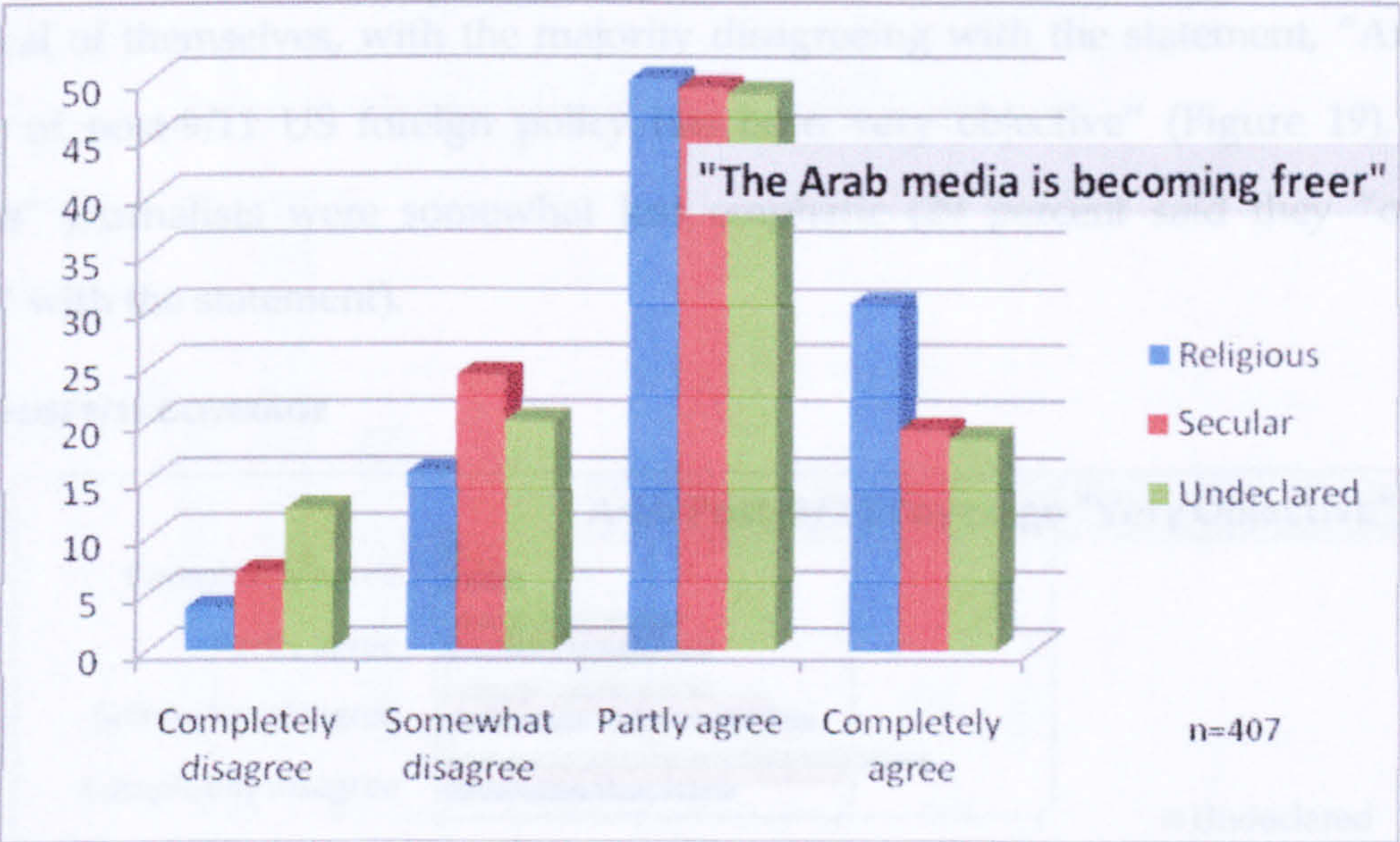
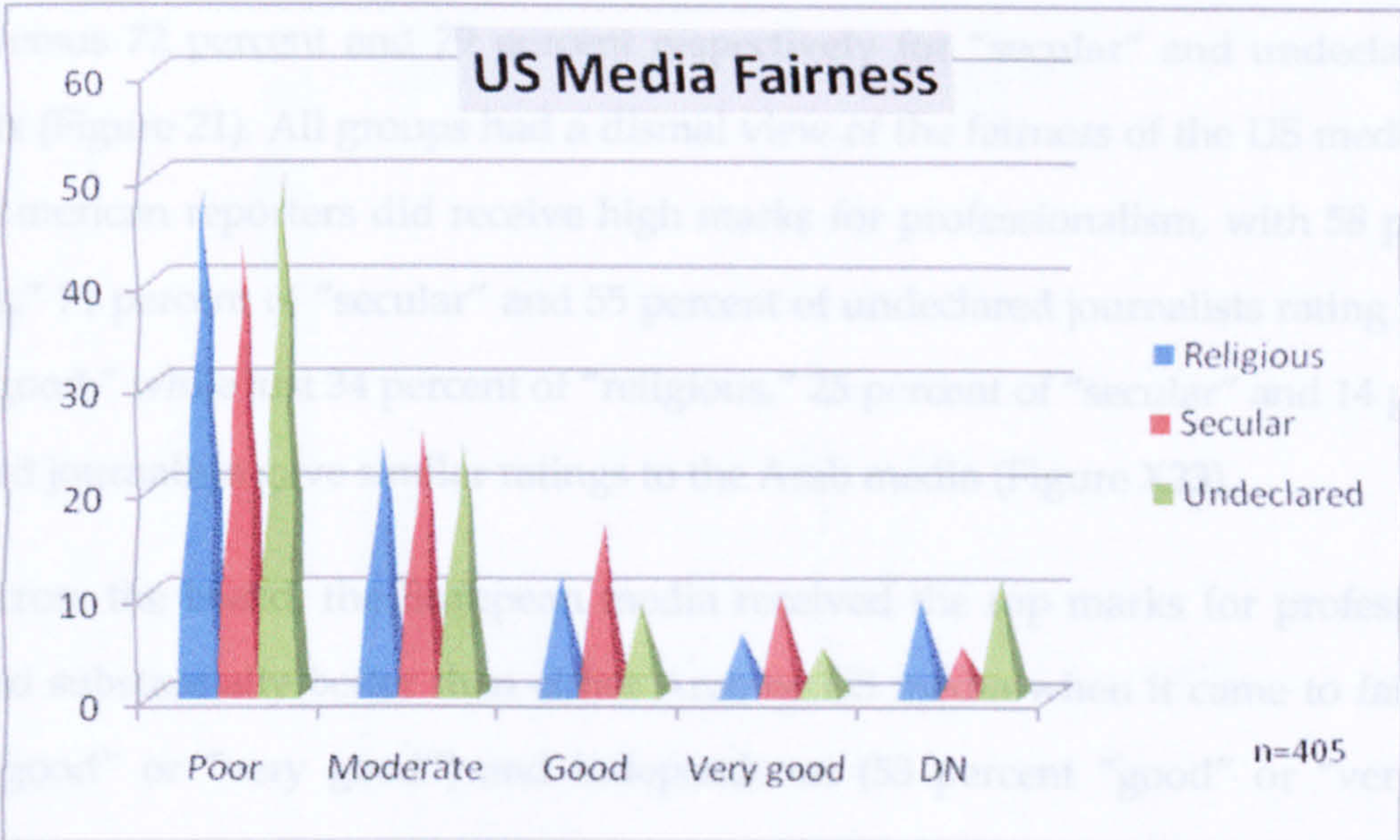


FIGURE 17: MEDIA FREEDOM



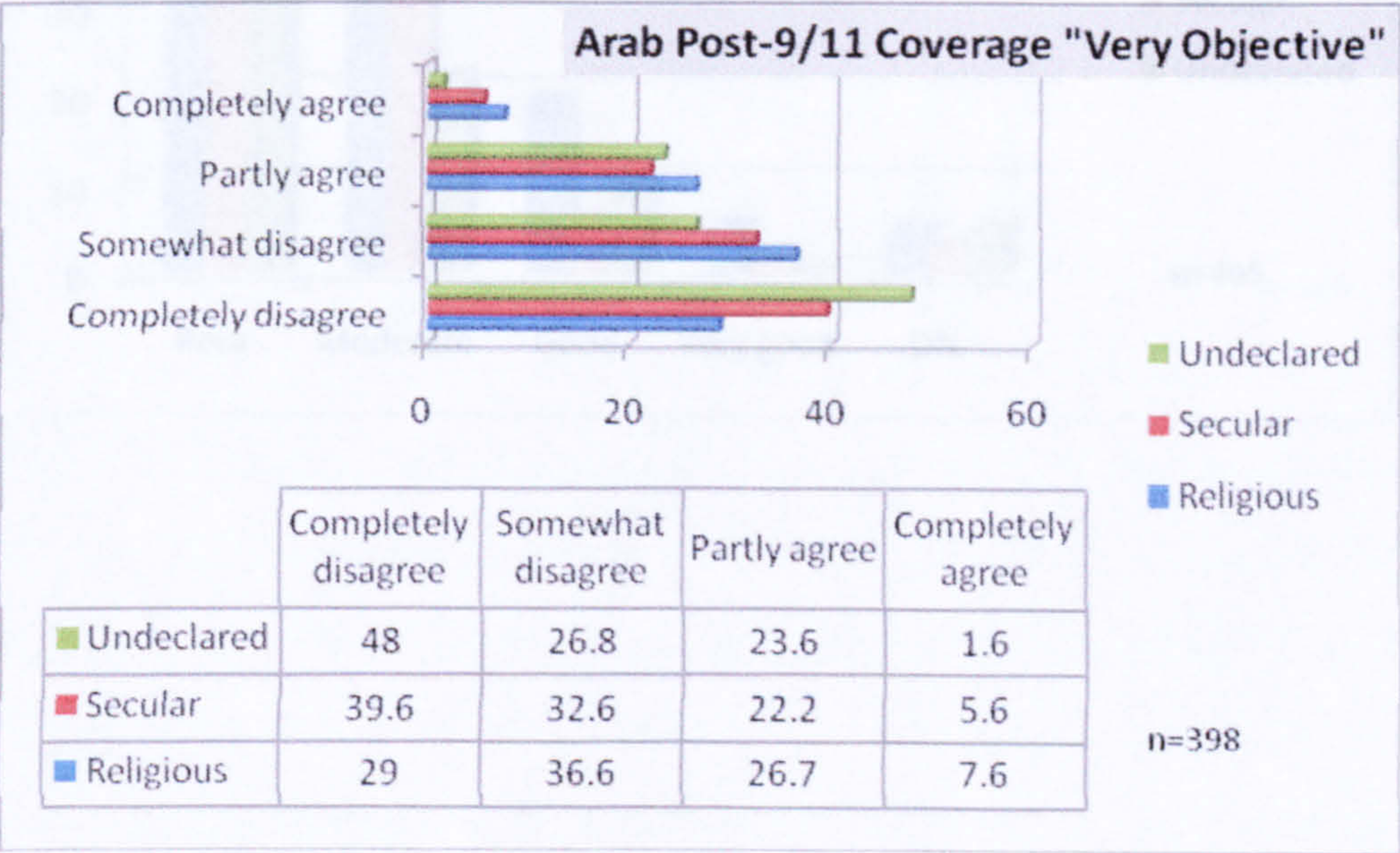
Media performance: The Arab journalists were highly critical of their US colleagues, with 62 percent of “religious,” 48 percent of “secular,” and 65 percent of undeclared journalists saying their “completely disagree” with the notion that “US coverage of post-9/11 US foreign policy has been completely objective,” and about half in each group rating US media fairness as “poor” (Figure 18).

FIGURE 18: MEDIA FAIRNESS



As critical as they may have been of the Western media, the Arab journalists were also critical of themselves, with the majority disagreeing with the statement, “Arab media coverage of post-9/11 US foreign policy has been very objective” (Figure 19), although “religious” journalists were somewhat less emphatic (29 percent said they “completely disagree” with the statement).

FIGURE 19: POST 9/11 COVERAGE



“Religious” Muslims were also less critical of Arab media fairness, with just 35 percent rating it “poor,” versus 58 percent and 61 percent respectively for “secular” and undeclared journalists (Figure 20). The same was true when it came to Arab media

independence; 53 percent of the “religious” journalists rated Arab media independence as “poor,” versus 72 percent and 79 percent respectively for “secular” and undeclared Arab journalists (Figure 21). All groups had a dismal view of the fairness of the US media (Figure 22), but American reporters did receive high marks for professionalism, with 58 percent of “religious,” 71 percent of “secular” and 55 percent of undeclared journalists rating it “good” or “very good,” while just 34 percent of “religious,” 25 percent of “secular” and 14 percent of undeclared journalists gave similar ratings to the Arab media (Figure X23).

Across the board, the European media received the top marks for professionalism and scored substantially better than either Arab or US media when it came to fairness (44 percent “good” or “very good”) and independence (53 percent “good” or “very good”) (Figure 24).

FIGURE 20: ARAB MEDIA FAIRNESS

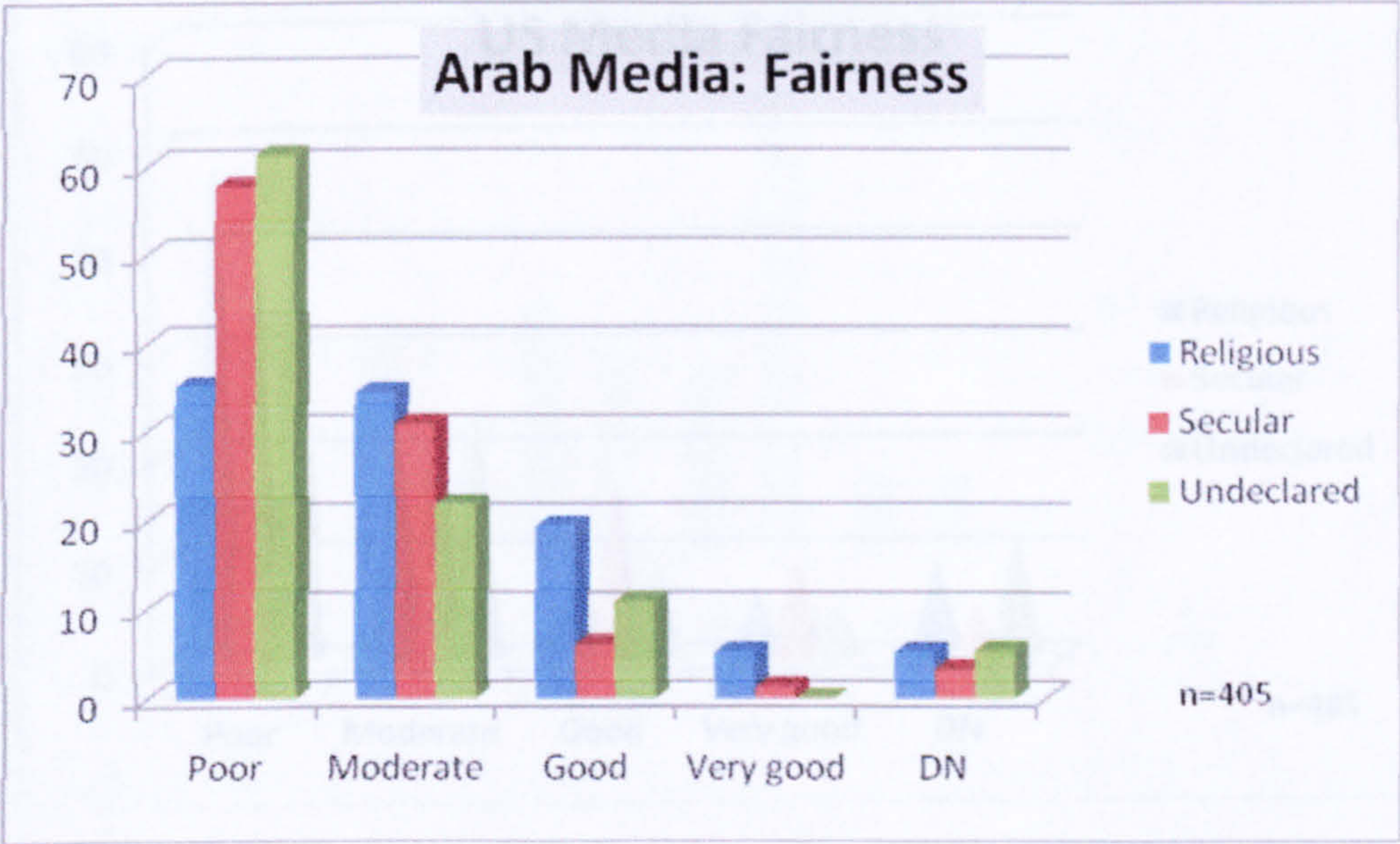


FIGURE 21: ARAB MEDIA INDEPENDENCE

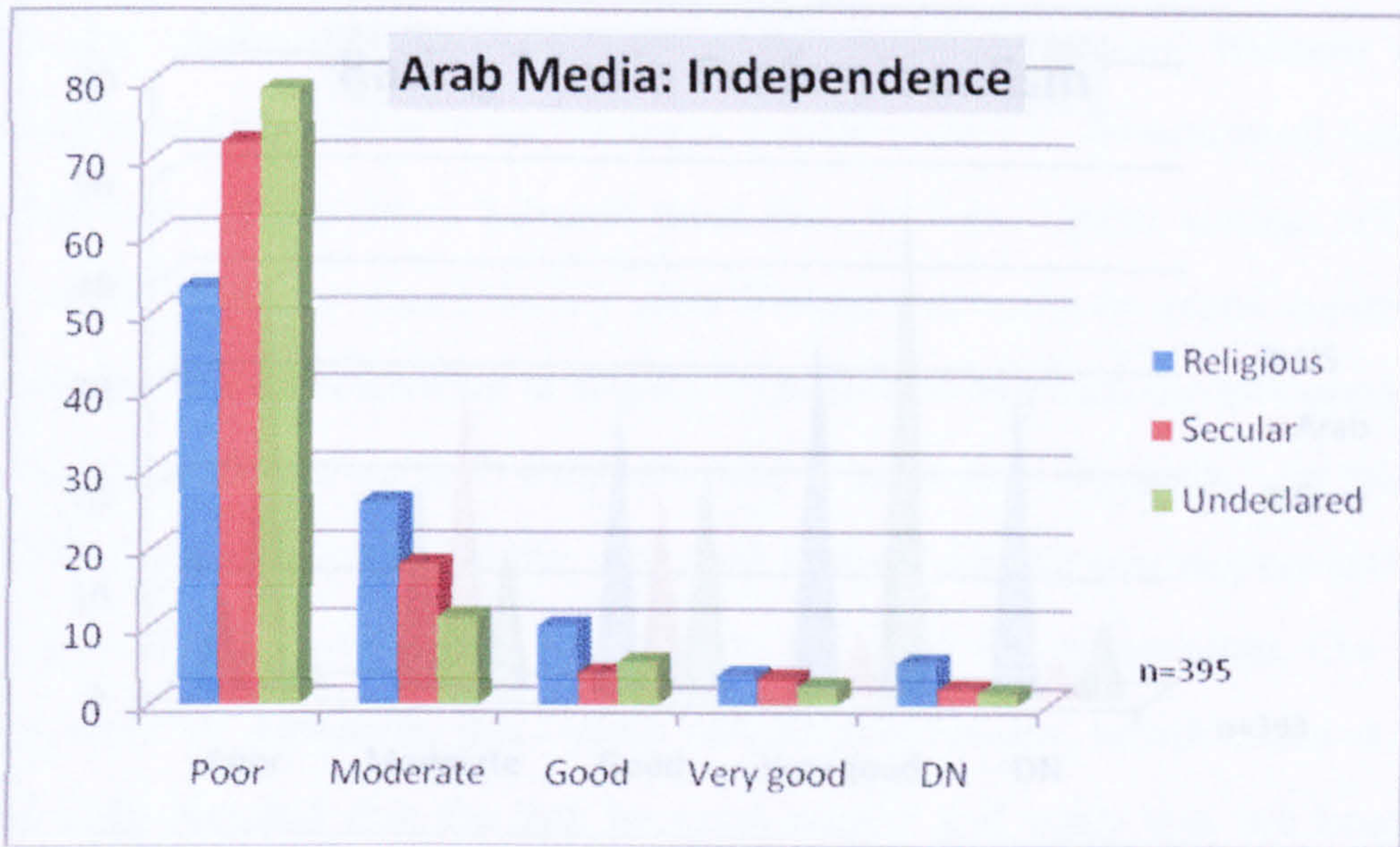
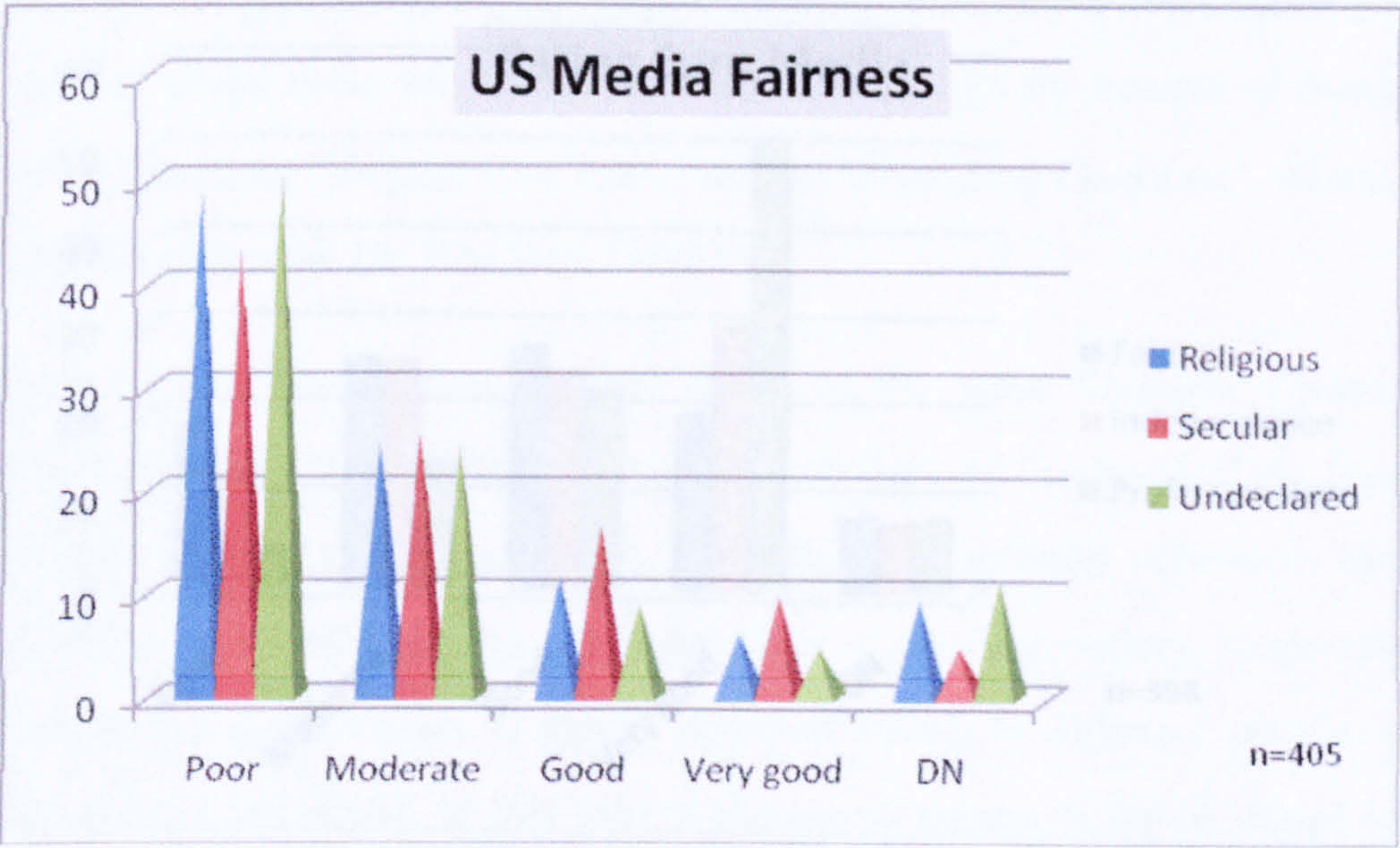


FIGURE 22: US MEDIA FAIRNESS



However, the idea that individual reporters, or at least the news organizations for which they work, must strive for balance in their coverage is a fundamental principle taught in journalism textbooks the world over. However, there is a wide disparity of opinion on just what that balance should be balanced. "In order for newspapers to be beneficial to society," Egyptian newspaper publisher Boutros al-Boustani wrote in the late nineteenth century, they must avoid publishing stories that "violated . . . the right principles."⁹⁸ Arab League Secretary-General Amr Moussa unwittingly touched the raw nerve at heart of this debate in 1997 when, in his opening comments at an Arab Thought Foundation conference on the

FIGURE 23: MEDIA PROFESSIONALISM

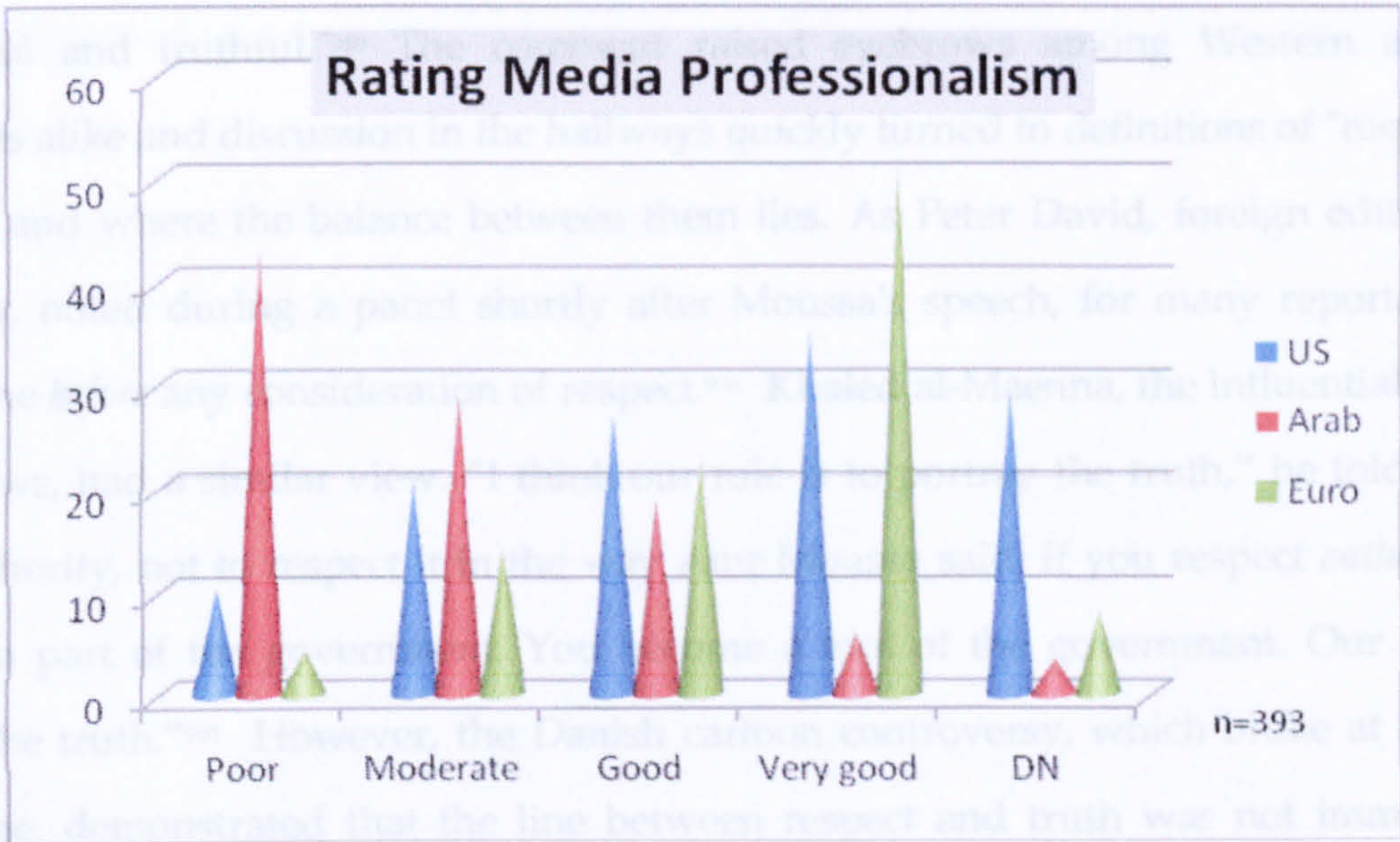
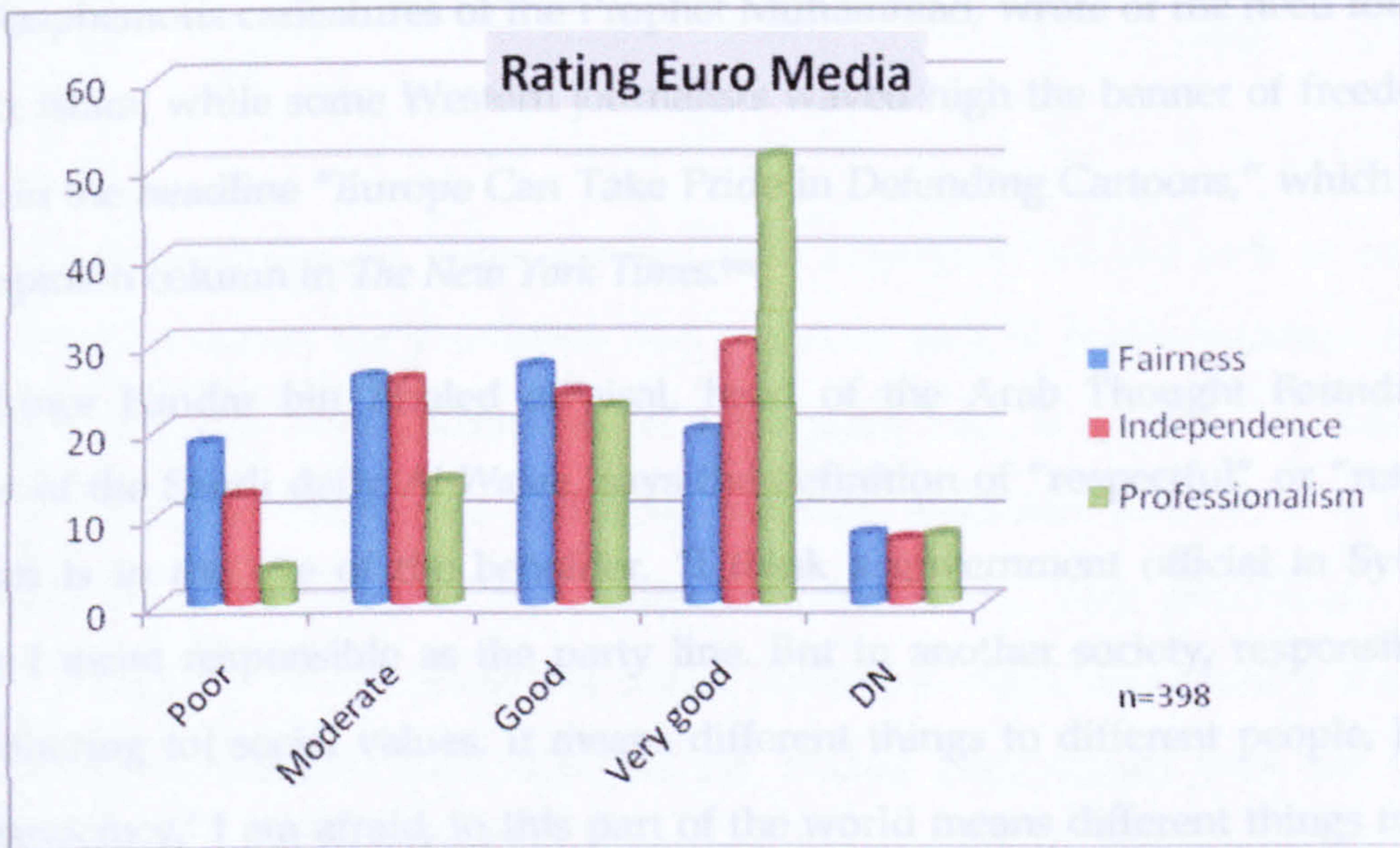


FIGURE 24: EURO MEDIA RATINGS



Balance: The idea that individual reporters, or at least the news organizations for which they work, must strive for balance in their coverage is a fundamental principle taught in journalism textbooks the world over. However, there is a wide disparity of opinion on just what it is that should be balanced. “In order for newspapers to be beneficial to society,” Lebanese newspaper publisher Boutros al-Boustani wrote in the late nineteenth century, they must avoid publishing stories that “violated ... the right principles.”⁹⁸⁸ Arab League Secretary General Amr Moussa unwittingly touched the raw nerve at heart of this debate in late 2005 when, in his opening comments at an Arab Thought Foundation conference on the

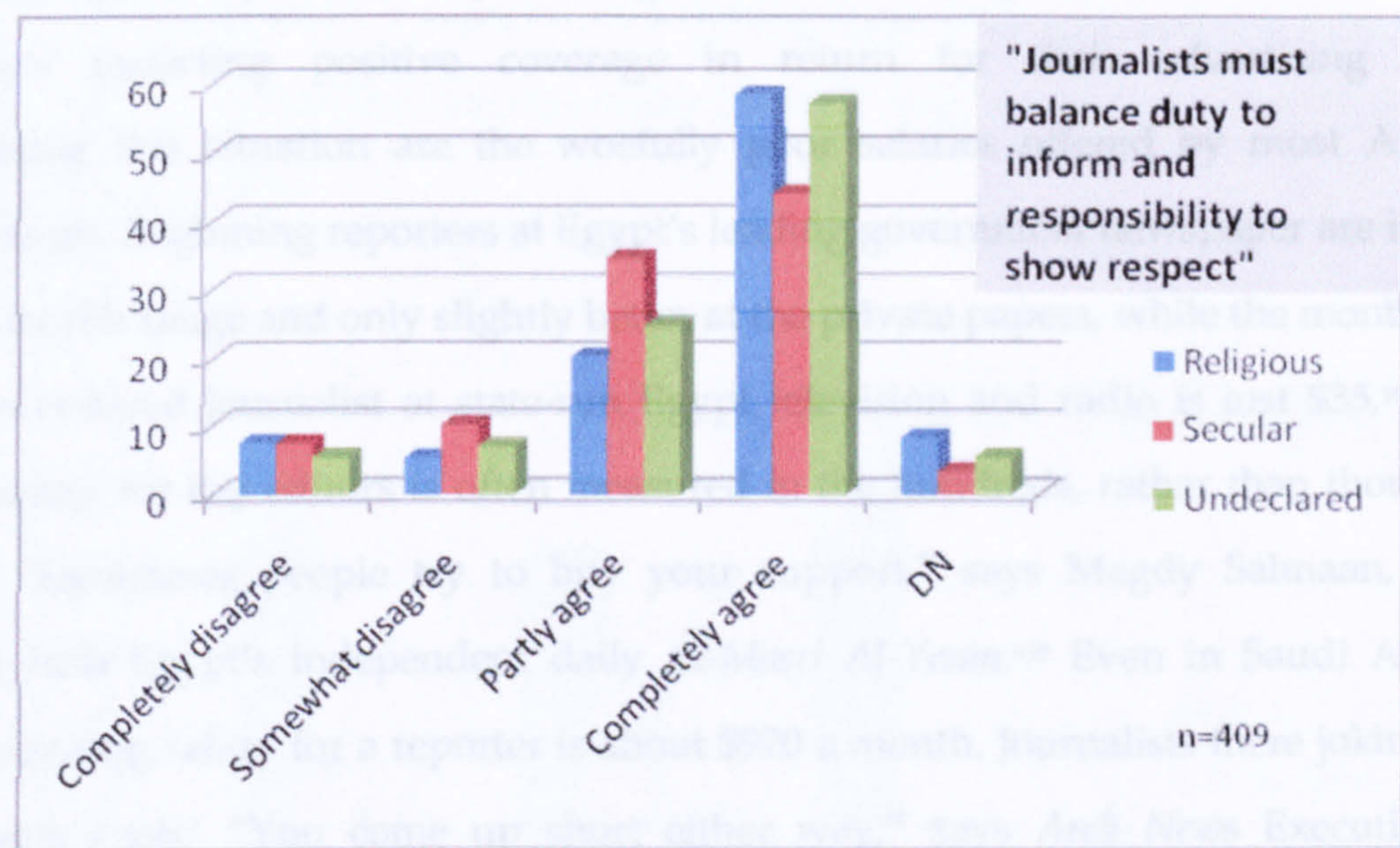
media in Dubai, he declared that journalists must strive for a balance between being “respectful and truthful.”⁹⁸⁹ The comment raised eyebrows among Western and Arab journalists alike and discussion in the hallways quickly turned to definitions of “respect” and “truth” – and where the balance between them lies. As Peter David, foreign editor of *The Economist*, noted during a panel shortly after Moussa's speech, for many reporters, truth must come *before* any consideration of respect.⁹⁹⁰ Khaled al-Maenna, the influential editor of Arab News, had a similar view. “I think our role is to portray the truth,” he told me. “To *resist* authority, not to respect it in the way Amr Moussa said. If you respect *authority*, you become a part of the government. You become a tool of the government. Our role is to respect the truth.”⁹⁹¹ However, the Danish cartoon controversy, which broke at about the same time, demonstrated that the line between respect and truth was not immutable or universal. Arab journalists, outraged that European newspapers had published what many saw as blasphemous caricatures of the Prophet Muhammad, wrote of the need for the West to respect Islam, while some Western journalists waved high the banner of freedom of the press, as in the headline “Europe Can Take Pride in Defending Cartoons,” which appeared over an opinion column in *The New York Times*.⁹⁹²

Prince Bandar bin Khaled alFaisal, head of the Arab Thought Foundation and publisher of the Saudi daily *Al-Watan*, says the definition of “respectful” or “responsible” journalism is in the eye of the beholder. “I think a government official in Syria would probably I mean responsible as the party line. But in another society, responsible would mean [adhering to] social values. It means different things to different people, just as the word ‘democracy,’ I am afraid, in this part of the world means different things to different people.”⁹⁹³ That was evident two years later when Iran put restrictions on Al-Jazeera’s correspondents and anti-Jazeera Shiite protests broke out in Baghdad after the channel aired comments critical of Iraq’s Grand Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani. “We affirm that the policy of Al-Jazeera is based on respecting religious and public figures. There was no intention at all to offend his Eminence Sistani,” the channel’s general director Wadah Khanfar said in a statement.⁹⁹⁴

Approximately 80 percent of journalists in all three sub-categories either completely or partly agreed with the statement, “Journalists must balance the need to inform the public

with the responsibility to show respect.” The only difference was that “religious” and undeclared journalists were slightly firmer in their conviction than their “secular” colleagues (Figure 25).

FIGURE 25: RESPECT



Journalist practices: As noted earlier, Arab journalists see the lack of professional ethics, corruption within the profession and a general lack of professionalism among the greatest challenges to Arab journalism. In the Middle East, as in other emerging media markets, an “envelope culture” is pervasive, in which individual journalists or their news organizations frequently benefit financially from the stories they publish. A “Cash for Editorial” survey by the International Public Relations Association found that only 40 percent of PR practitioners in Africa and the Middle East agreed with the statement, “Editorial copy appears as a result of the editorial judgment of the journalists and editors involved, not through any influence or payment by a third party.” About 80 percent of those surveyed by IPRA said journalists seldom or never refused free travel or products, 60 percent said it was common for favorable stories to be published in return for ad purchases and 40 percent said journalists commonly accepted payments to print press releases.⁹⁹⁵ Kuwaiti journalist Hussain Abdul Rahman goes so far as to suggest it is impossible to expect unbiased election coverage in the Arab world due to the frequency with which journalists are bribed by candidates to provide favorable coverage. “They are taking money from the

candidates and the parties. This has been happening all over the Arab world," he told a seminar in Qatar on election coverage.⁹⁹⁶

An example on a very different level is the practice at Egypt's leading daily, *Al-Ahram*, that gives top editors a percentage of all advertising sold, a situation that leaves advertisers expecting positive coverage in return for their advertising dollars.⁹⁹⁷ Exacerbating this situation are the woefully poor salaries offered by most Arab news organizations. Beginning reporters at Egypt's leading government newspaper are in the \$80-to-\$90 a month range and only slightly better at the private papers, while the monthly salary for a newly-hired journalist at state-run Egypt television and radio is just \$35,⁹⁹⁸ and the official salary for top editors is often measured in the hundreds, rather than thousands, of dollars. "Sometimes people try to buy your support," says Magdy Salmaan, a young reporter with Egypt's independent daily *Al-Masri Al-Youm*.⁹⁹⁹ Even in Saudi Arabia, the average starting salary for a reporter is about \$920 a month. Journalists there jokingly call it 'the beggar's job;' "You come up short either way," says *Arab News* Executive Editor Somayya Jabarti. "Low pay and trouble getting serious stories published."¹⁰⁰⁰ One poll found that 40 percent of Arabic-language journalists said they would reprint a press release in return for a gift.¹⁰⁰¹ "It's the whole structure of the job," says Jabarti. "If they are well paid and well-trained, they won't need" the gifts or envelopes.¹⁰⁰²

That "envelope culture" extends to newspapers themselves. "We are offered millions from many, many governments," says Abdel Bari Atwan, editor-in-chief of the pan-Arab Palestinian daily *Al-Quds Al-Arabi*, a perennial thorn in the side of the Saudi and Egyptian regimes. "The Saudi government offered. Kuwaiti government offered. Some governments offer because we are outside the Saudi cloak." Atwan claims he does not accept those offers, but adds, "I do not want to compromise my editorial independence. Through now we managed to survive, but for how long, I do not know."¹⁰⁰³ That aspiration to independence is – in theory, if not in practice – shared by the majority of journalists surveyed. Respondents universally rejected the statement, "It is acceptable to take money to write favorable stories," with nearly 90 percent of "religious" and undeclared journalists saying it is never acceptable and slightly fewer "secular" journalists taking the same hard-line stance. There was somewhat more ambivalence among all three groups at the statement, "It is acceptable to

take travel money from people or organizations that are the subjects of stories,” with “secular” journalists again taking a somewhat more liberal view (Figure 26). The ambivalence may be traced to the fact that it is common practice for companies holding news conferences to provide “taxi money” to Arab journalists whose news organizations might not otherwise send a reporter. All three groups also opposed the idea of writing favorable stories in return for advertisements (“never” selected by 74 percent, 73 percent and 81 percent respectively).

FIGURE 26: TRAVEL MONEY



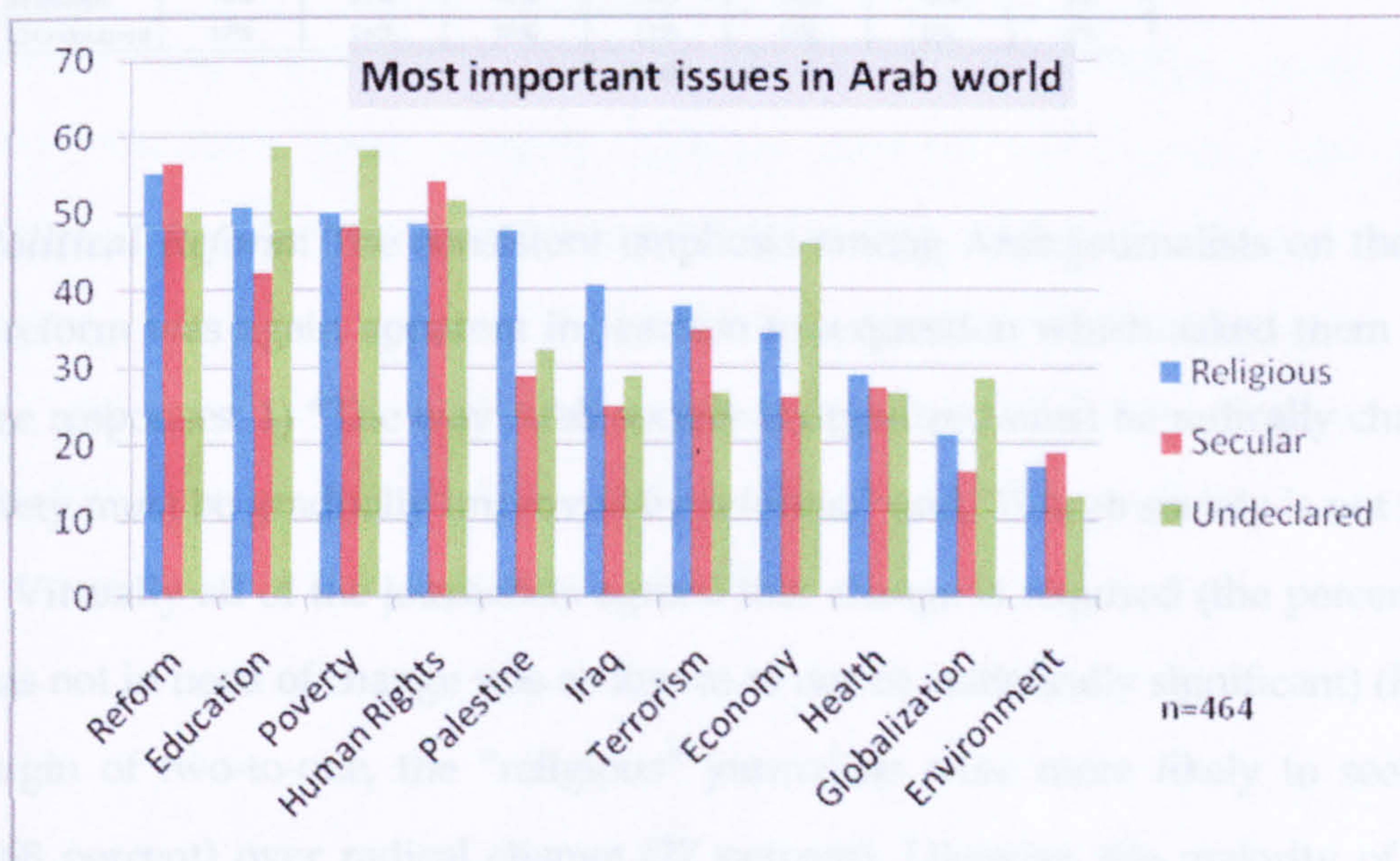
4) POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In his typology of Arab media, first outlined in the late 1970s, William Rugh, a former US ambassador to Yemen and the United Arab Emirates, observed that “Arab information media have always been closely tied to politics;” and for editors the relationship “to the regime in power is a very important political factor.”¹⁰⁰⁴ When those words were first written, direct government control and a weak economic base drove that relationship. A quarter of a century later, the dynamics of the Arab media have become more complex with the rise of semi-independent, pan-Arab satellite television channels, which, as documented earlier, have influenced the print media. The intrinsic tie to politics remains, though, in many respects, it has taken on a very different nature. There is now a two-way flow, as reporting begins to influence regional – and, to a lesser extent, Arab domestic – policies, as much as media are influenced by the architects of those policies.

Since the worldview of the media gatekeepers helps to frame the way in which stories are presented to the public, even in the absence of any overt or conscious bias,¹⁰⁰⁵ it is important to understand how journalists themselves perceive the major issues of the day. Respondents were thus asked a series of questions related to the international landscape as it affects the Middle East.

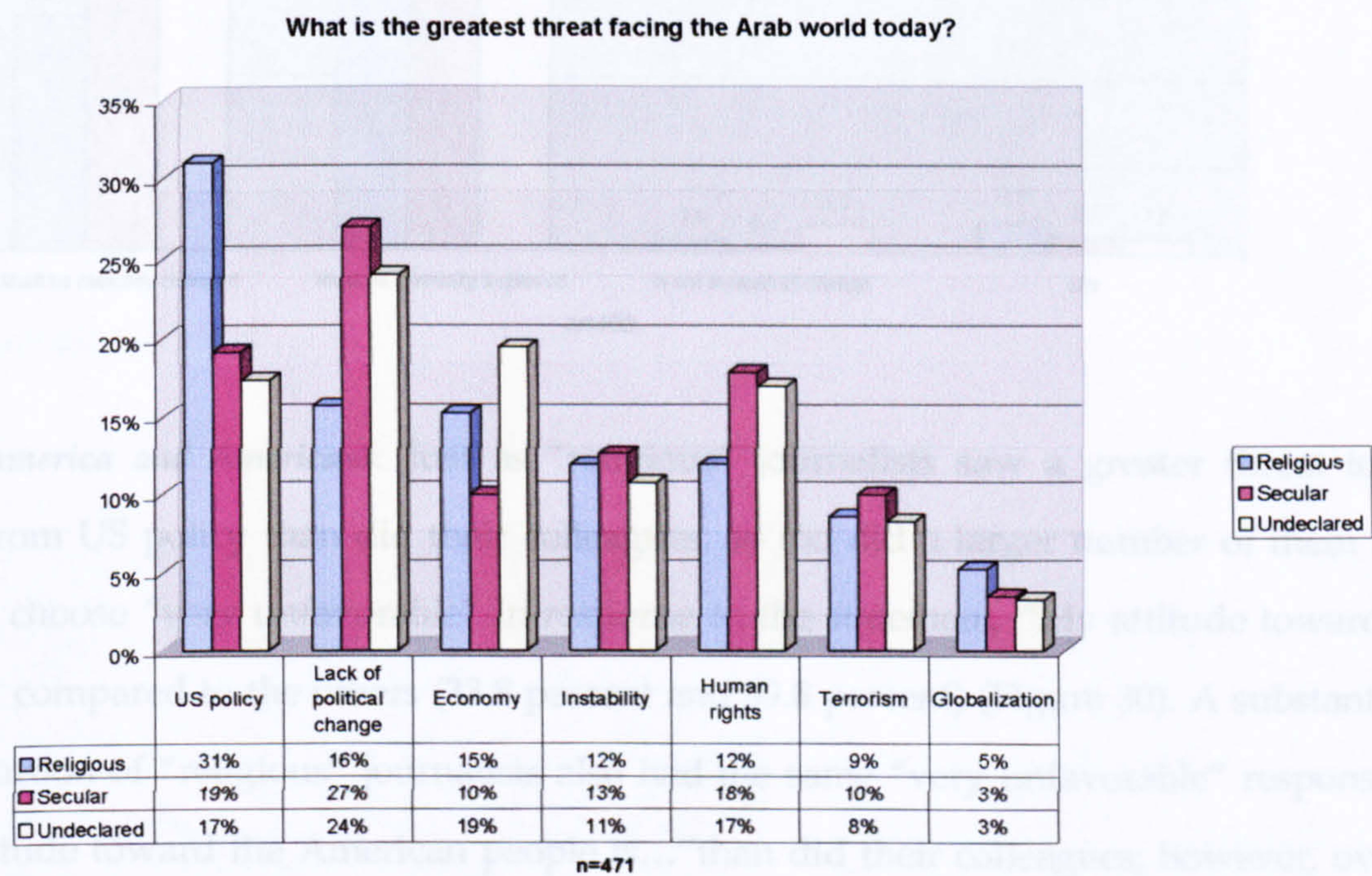
Regional Issues: Respondents were provided with a list of 11 issues that had been identified as top concerns in various surveys of the Arab public. They were asked to rate their relative importance. All the journalists surveyed agreed on the top four issues facing the Arab world: political reform, education, poverty and human rights, though each subgroup prioritized them in a slightly different way (Figure 27). “Religious” and “secular” journalists said political reform was the most important issue, while undeclared journalists ranked it fourth, putting education as the top priority, followed closely by poverty. The areas of greatest difference included Palestine, Iraq and the economy. Almost twice as many “religious” journalists than “secular” journalists believe Palestine is a “most important” issue, and the gap between the two on the Iraq conflict is almost as large. “Religious” journalists ranked Palestine and Iraq as fifth and sixth most important respectively, while they came in sixth and eighth for “secular” journalists and sixth and seventh for the undeclared. Where undeclared journalists put “economy” fifth on their list of priorities, it was eighth for the others.

FIGURE 27: MOST IMPORTANT ARAB ISSUES



Regional Threats: “Religious” journalists and their colleagues were sharply divided on the question of the greatest threat to the Arab world today, when the ever-present issue of Israel is excluded (Figure 28).¹⁰⁰⁶ Twice as many “religious” journalists (31 percent) saw US policy as the primary threat compared to the six other options. “Secular” and undeclared journalists gave precedence to the lack of political reform in the region, which “religious” journalists ranked second. Both “religious” journalists and undeclared put the economy as third, while “secular” and undeclared journalists put more emphasis on human rights (18 percent and 17 percent) than the “religious” sub-group. All sub-groups put “terrorism” near the bottom of the priority list, out-ranking only “globalization.”

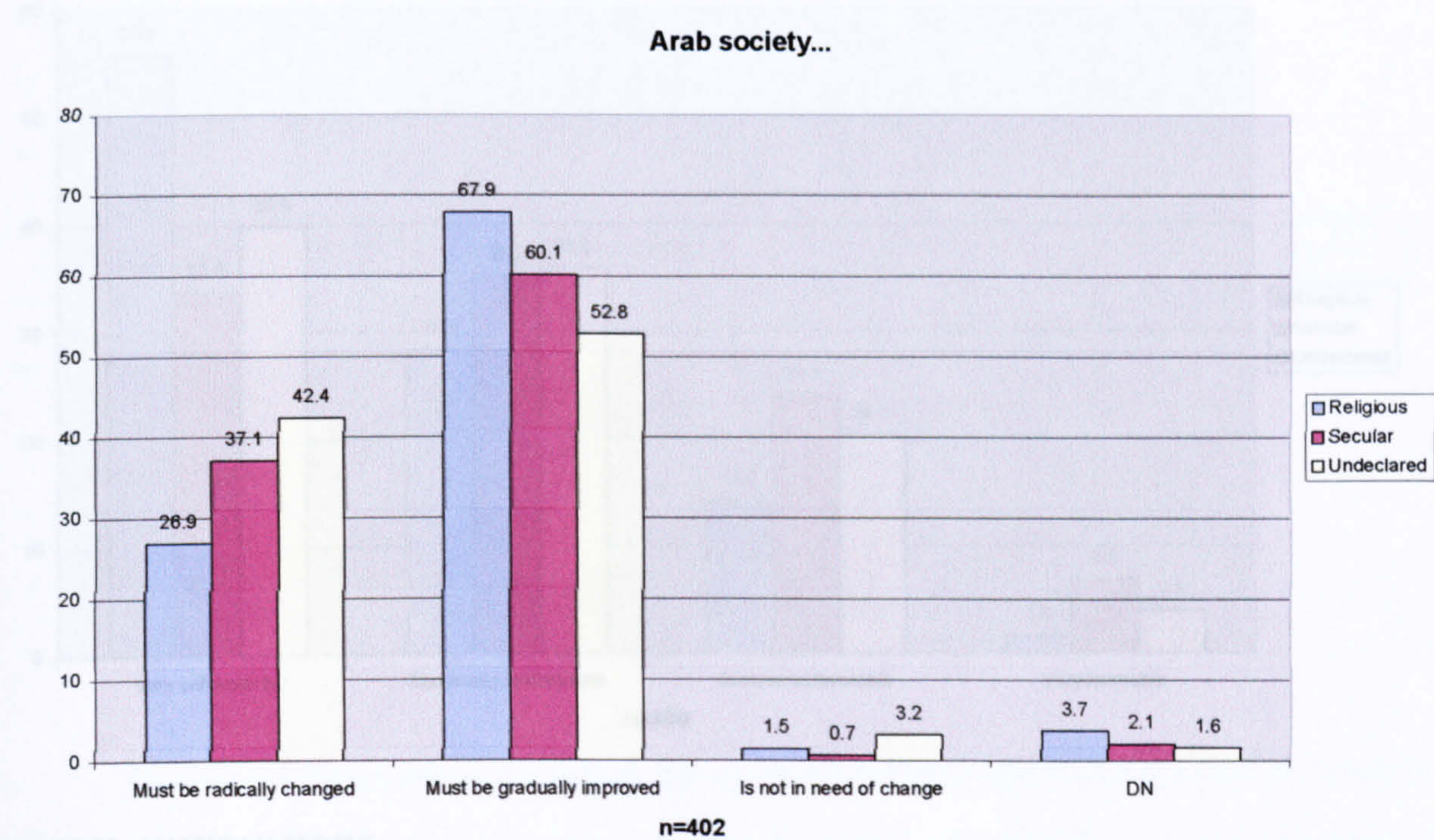
FIGURE 28: GREATEST THREATS



Political Reform: The consistent emphasis among Arab journalists on the need for political reform was again apparent in reaction to a question which asked them to choose from three responses: 1) “The way Arab society is organized must be radically changed;” 2) Arab society must be gradually improved by reforms;” and, 3) Arab society is not in need of change.” Virtually all of the journalists agreed that change is required (the percentage who said it was not in need of change was so low as to not be statistically significant) (Figure 29). By a margin of two-to-one, the “religious” journalists were more likely to seek gradual change (68 percent) over radical change (27 percent). Likewise, the majority of “secular”

journalists preferred gradual change (60 percent) to radical change (37 percent), while the undeclared were more evenly divided (53/42).

FIGURE 29: ARAB SOCIETY & CHANGE



America and Americans: Just as “religious” journalists saw a greater threat to the region from US policy than did their colleagues, so too did a larger number of them (55.9 percent) choose “very unfavorable” in response to the statement, “My attitude toward the US is...” compared to the others (33.8 percent and 39.8 percent) (Figure 30). A substantially larger portion of “religious” journalists also had the same “very unfavorable” response to, “My attitude toward the American people is...” than did their colleagues; however, overall “religious” journalists were roughly divided between very unfavorable/somewhat unfavorable and very favorable/somewhat favorable (52.8 percent vs. 47.2 percent) (Figure 31). There was no such ambivalence when it came to the statement, “My attitude toward US policy is...” All three sub-groups demonstrated a highly negative view, the only difference being that slightly more “religious” journalists were “very unfavorable” (77 percent) than the other two groups (62 and 70 percent) (Figure 32).

FIGURE 30: US POLICY

FIGURE 30: ATTITUDE TOWARD US

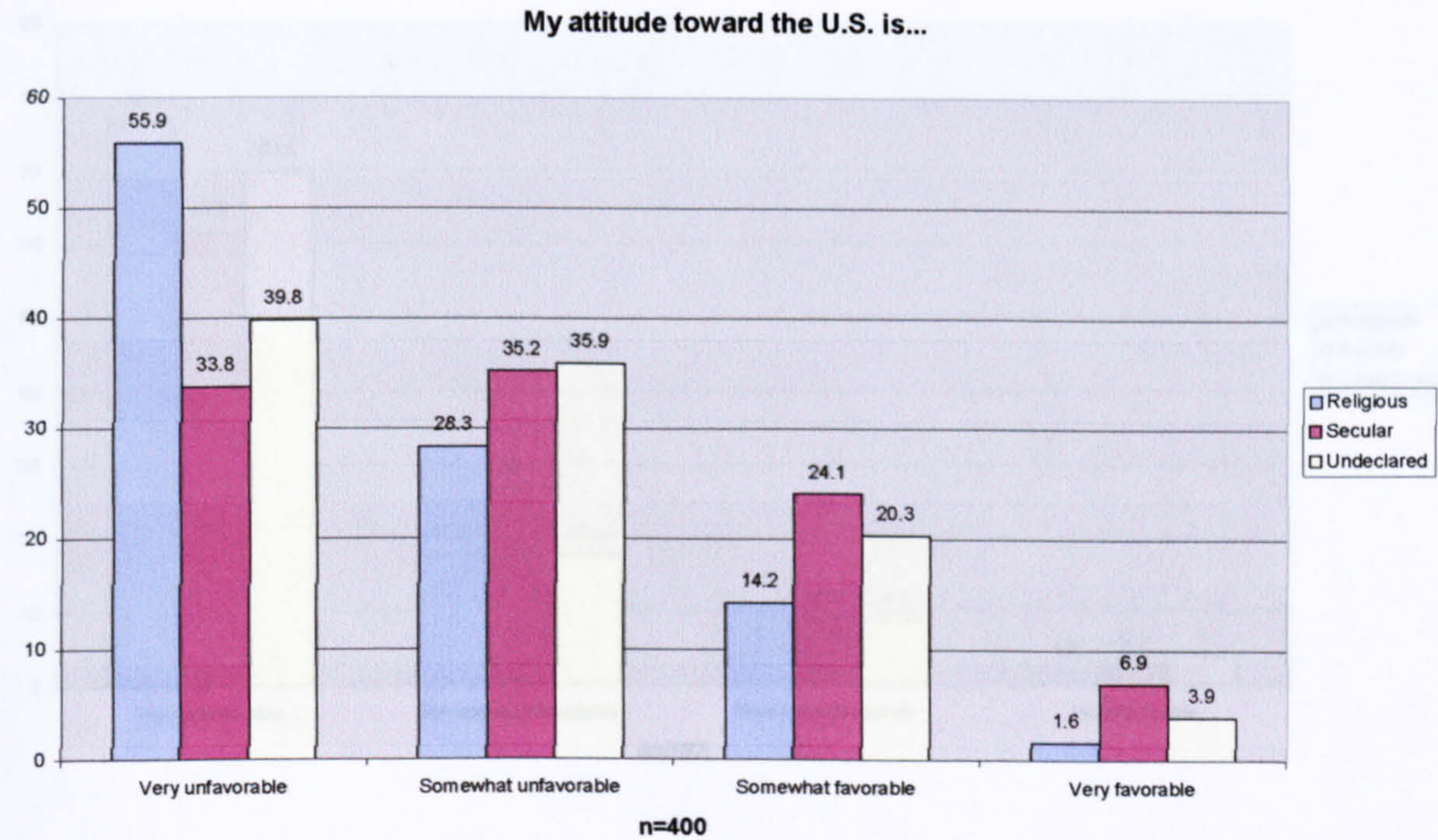


FIGURE 31: AMERICAN PEOPLE

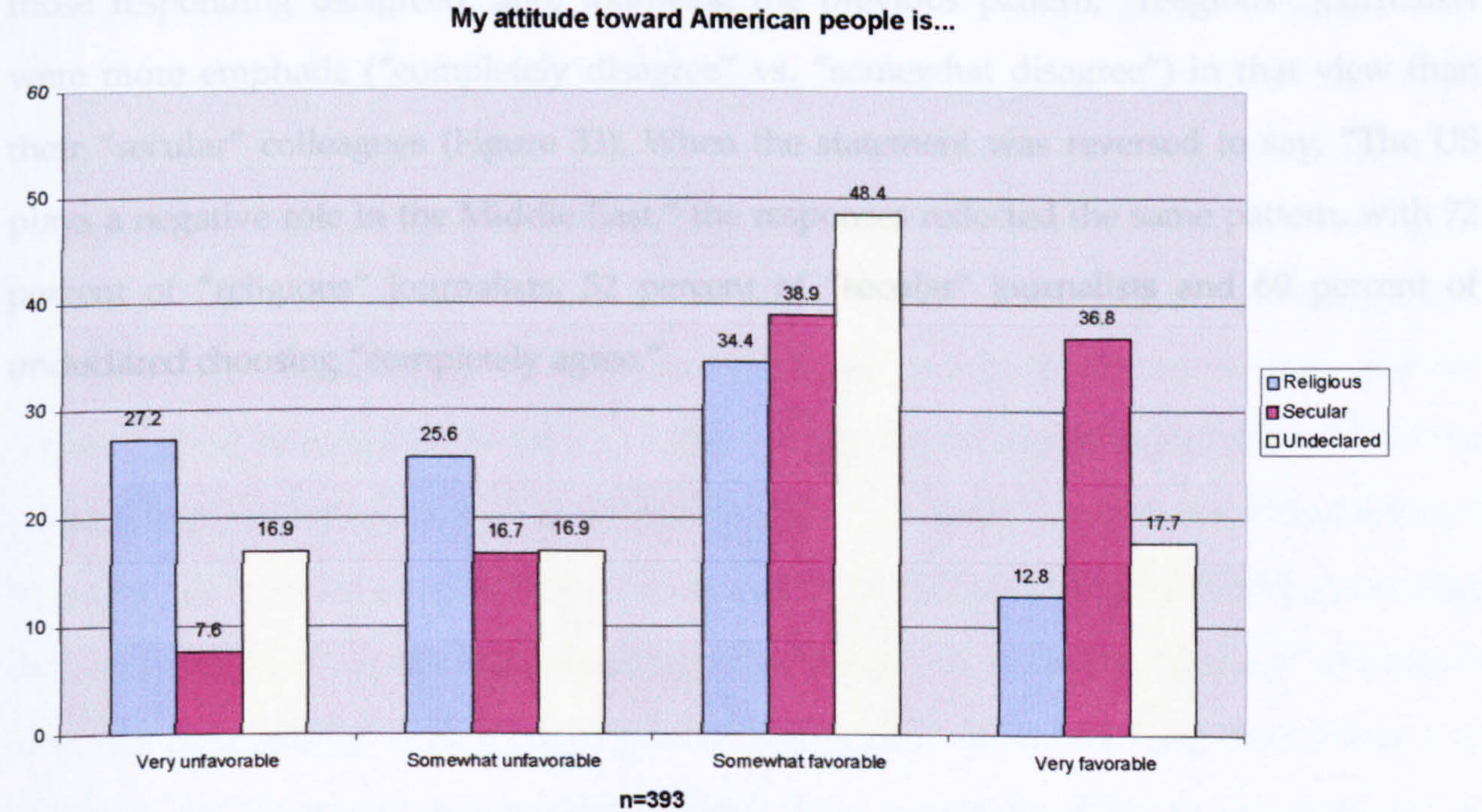
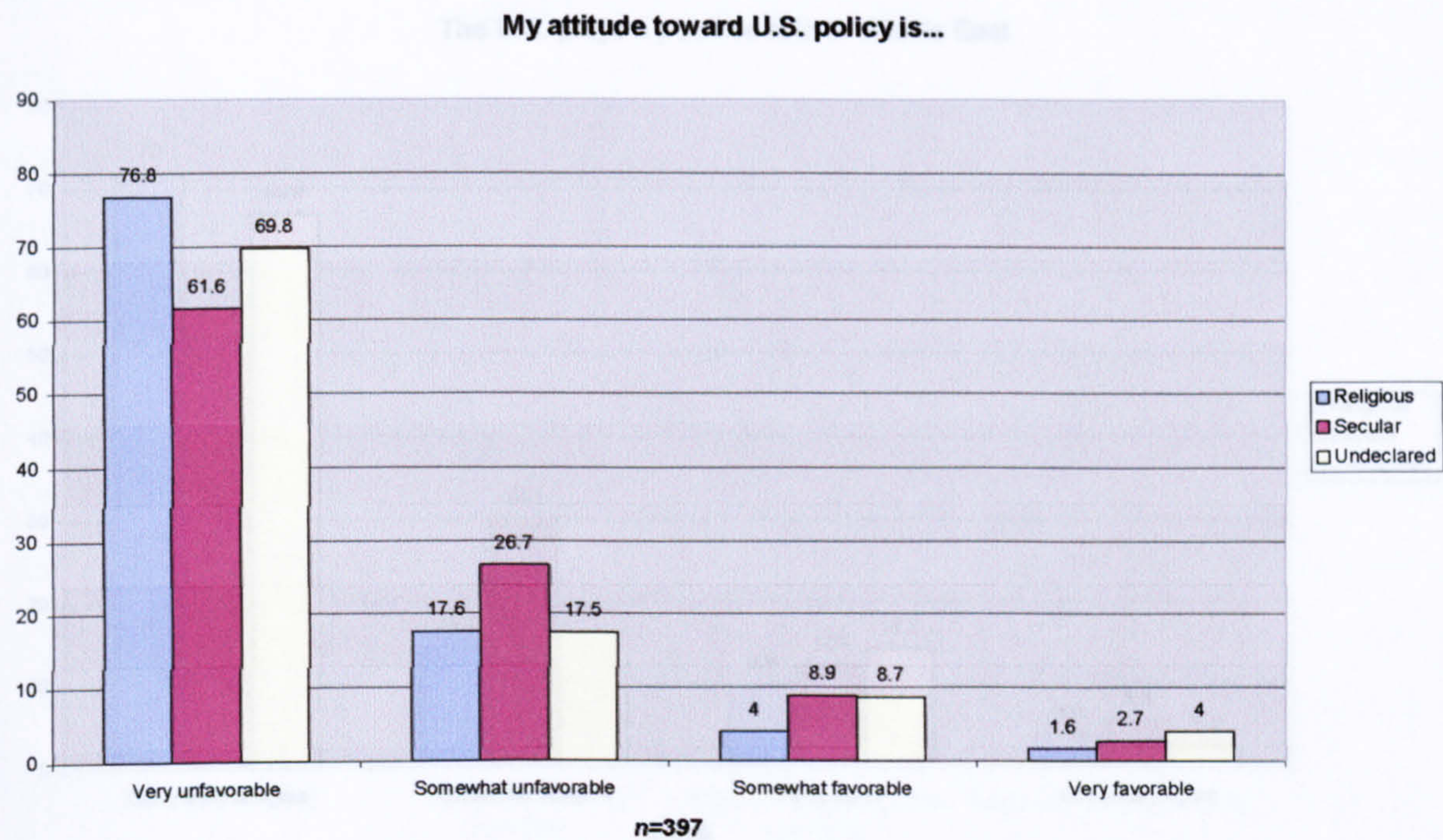
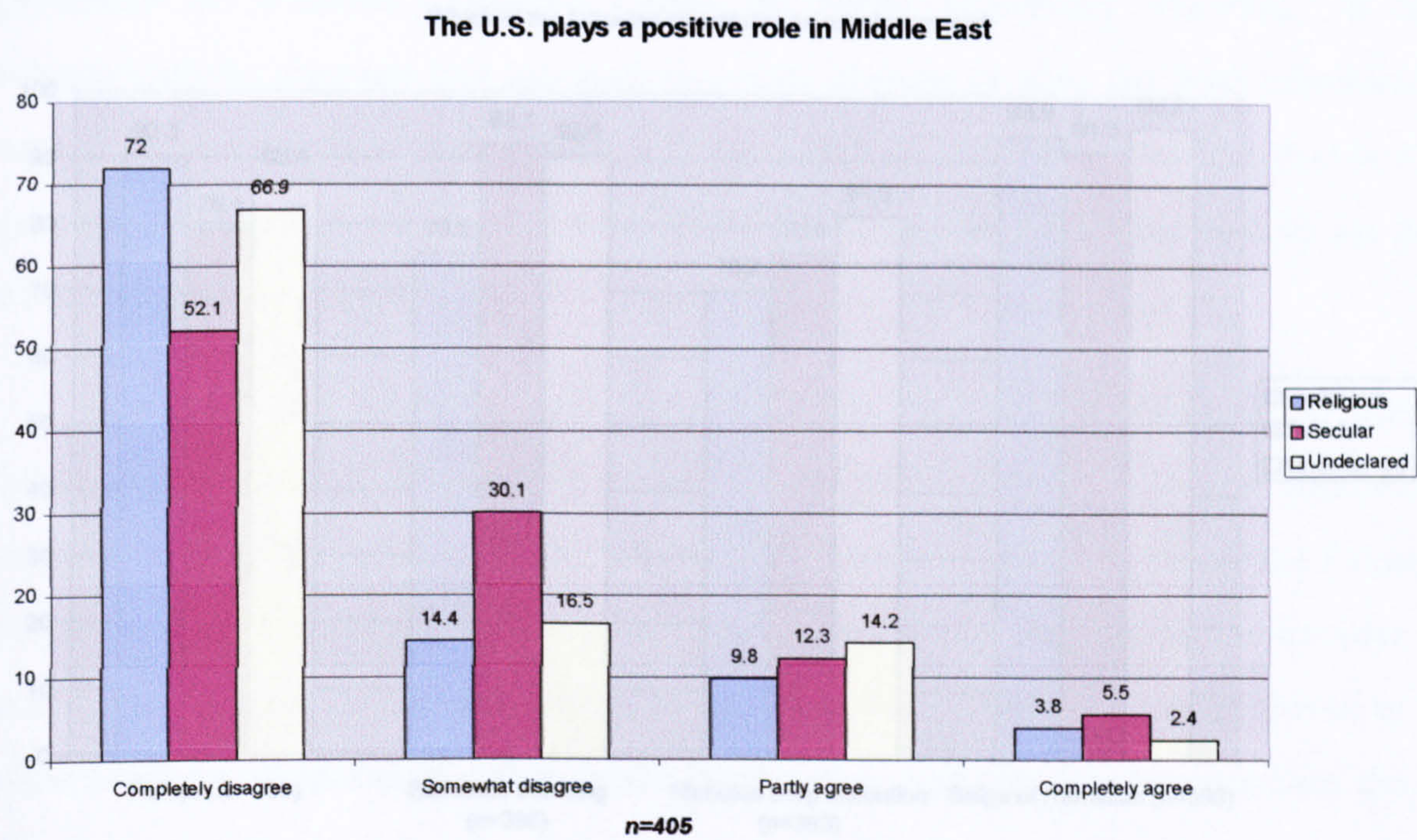


FIGURE 32: US POLICY



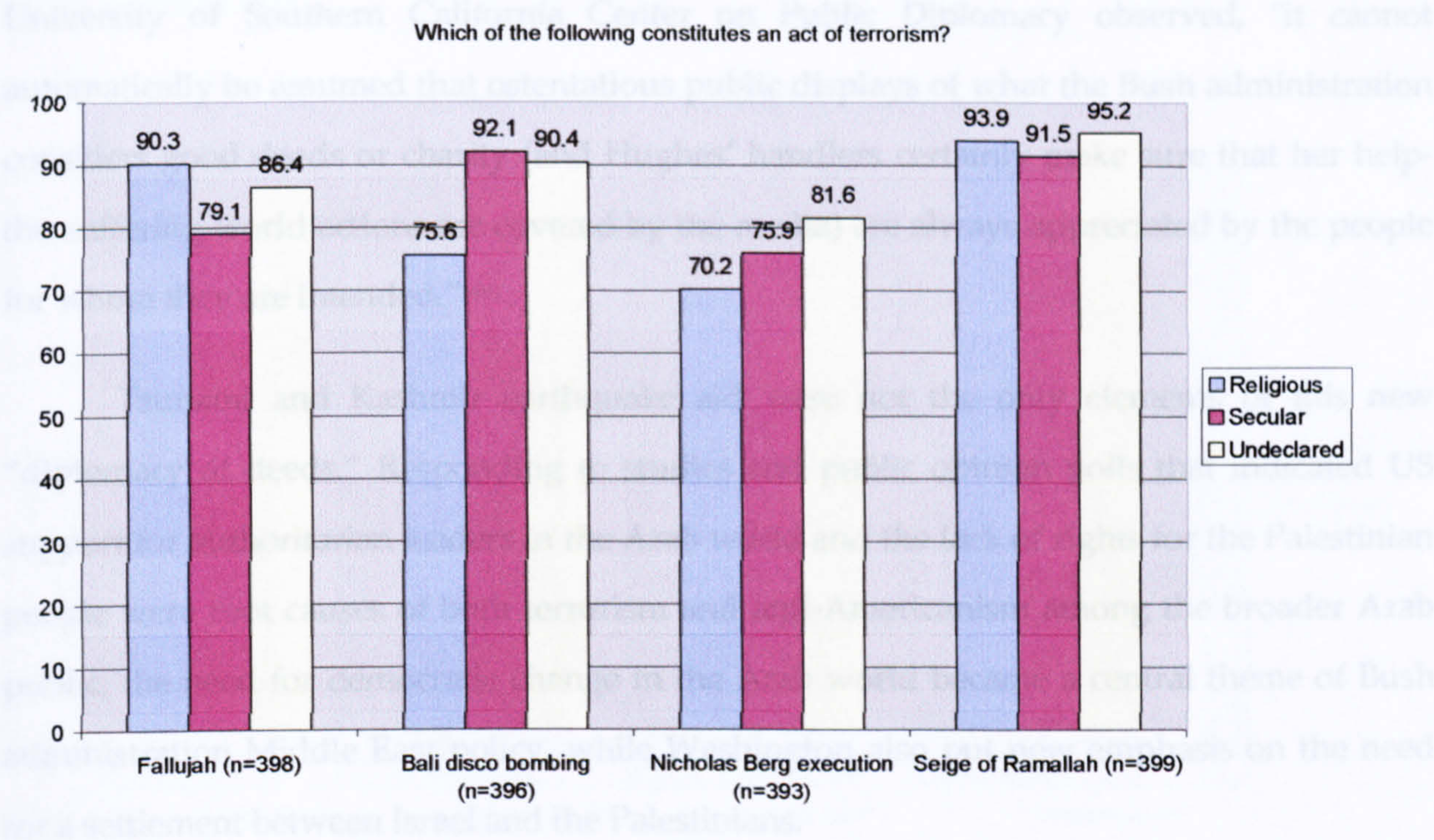
That same trend was seen when the journalists were specifically asked to respond to the statement, “The US plays a positive role in the Middle East.” More than 80 percent of all those responding disagreed, and, following the previous pattern, “religious” journalists were more emphatic (“completely disagree” vs. “somewhat disagree”) in that view than their “secular” colleagues (Figure 33). When the statement was reversed to say, “The US plays a negative role in the Middle East,” the responses reflected the same pattern, with 72 percent of “religious” journalists, 52 percent of “secular” journalists and 60 percent of undeclared choosing “completely agree.”

FIGURE 33: US ROLE



Terrorism: There have been various accusations from Washington that Arab journalists glorify certain acts of terrorism aimed at Americans and Israelis. There has also been criticism of the way in which certain acts of violence carried out by the US and Israel are framed in the Arab media. Respondents were asked to rate four highly-publicized incidents of violence and indicate whether they thought each of these constituted an act of terrorism. They included the US siege of Fallujah, Iraq in the spring of 2004; the bombing of a disco in Bali in the fall of 2004 that killed dozens of Australian tourists and Indonesians; the on-camera beheading of US contractor Nicholas Berg by insurgents in Iraq; and the Israeli siege of Ramallah in the spring of 2002. A substantial majority of journalists identified all four as acts of terror. More than 90 percent of the “religious” journalists said Fallujah and Ramallah were acts of terrorism, but the percentage of “religious” journalists who identified the Bali disco bombing and Berg execution as terrorism was in the 70s. “Secular” journalists were just the opposite, with about 92 percent pointing to Bali and the Berg execution as acts of terror, and 79 percent and 76 percent respectively identifying Fallujah and Ramallah as terrorism. Undeclared journalists followed the same general pattern, those the percentage differences were narrower (Figure 34).

FIGURE 34: ACTS OF TERRORISM



5) US PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The December 2004 tsunami that killed at least 200,000 people in Indonesia, Sri Lanka and India came at a time when America’s popularity in the Muslim world was at a then all-time low. The US and Western countries reacted with a substantial outpouring of official and private aid and logistical support. Much the same occurred 11 months later when a devastating earthquake shook Kashmir killing more than 75,000 people. Many in Washington saw the disasters as an opportunity; a chance to use relief aid as a tool of public diplomacy. Washington policymakers gave big play to a poll that tied tsunami relief to an increase in favorable attitudes toward the US among Indonesians.¹⁰⁰⁷ President Bush’s boast that Indonesians “see a different America now,”¹⁰⁰⁸ simply fed suspicions the aid was an attempt to buy goodwill. Yet such linkage was quickly enshrined in US foreign policy, culminating in what Karen Hughes, undersecretary of state for public diplomacy, dubbed “the diplomacy of deeds:”

Americans should know we are giving the gift of hope to thousands of people whose names we will never know. And I will continue to advocate we do even more, because the diplomacy of deeds serves our own national interests and the people of every nation.¹⁰⁰⁹

But as John Brown, a former Foreign Service officer and senior fellow at the University of Southern California Center on Public Diplomacy observed, "it cannot automatically be assumed that ostentatious public displays of what the Bush administration considers good deeds or charity (and Hughes' handlers certainly make sure that her help-the-suffering-world actions are covered by the media) are always appreciated by the people for whom they are intended."¹⁰¹⁰

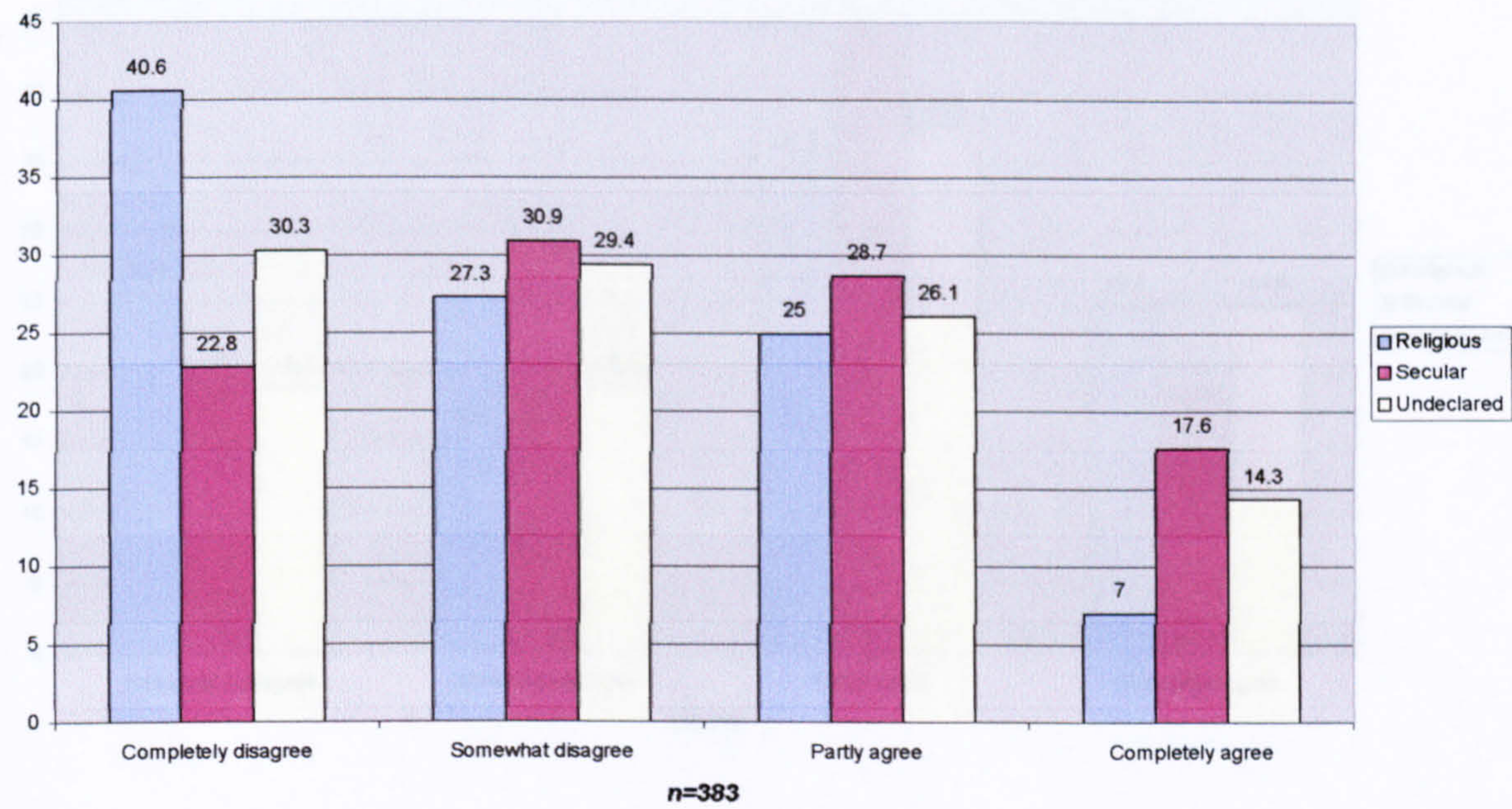
Tsunami and Kashmir earthquake aid were not the only elements of this new "diplomacy of deeds." Responding to studies and public opinion polls that indicated US support for authoritarian leaders in the Arab world and the lack of rights for the Palestinian people were root causes of both terrorism and anti-Americanism among the broader Arab public, the need for democratic change in the Arab world became a central theme of Bush administration Middle East policy, while Washington also put new emphasis on the need for a settlement between Israel and the Palestinians.

To test the impact those efforts were having among the journalists through whose prism Arabs view such policies, respondents were asked a series of questions about *Indonesian tsunami aid*, *US calls for Arab democracy*, and the question of Palestine.

Tsunami Aid: Following on from the negative views of US policy, the survey found that Arab journalists, particularly the self-declared "religious" Muslims, are largely cynical about actions the Bush administration says are designed to help Arabs or Muslims. Sixty percent of the journalists polled completely or somewhat disagreed with the statement, "The US gave tsunami aid out of a sincere desire to help" (Figure 35). Once more, "religious" journalists held the strongest negative view, with 40 percent of them choosing "strongly disagree." "Secular" journalists were more undecided, with 46 percent partly or completely agreeing with the statement, while 40 percent of the undeclared reporters also giving the US the benefit of the doubt.

FIGURE 35: TSUNAMI AID

Tsunami: US gave aid out of sincere desire to help



Just over 60 percent of the journalists also agreed that the aid was “an attempt to generate Muslim support” (Figure 36). In this case, slightly more “secular” and undeclared than “religious” journalists supported that view, while fully a quarter of the “religious” journalists completely disagreed. Meanwhile, a majority of journalists agreed that, “Whatever motivation,” the aid “was a noble and good thing” (Figure 37). But in this case, far more “secular” (72 percent) and undeclared journalists (63 percent) supported that view, which was largely rejected by almost half of the “religious” journalists, of whom 30 percent “completely” disagreed and 15 percent “somewhat” disagreed.

Democracy: US statements of support for democracy in the Arab world were met with near unanimous cynicism by the journalists polled. Almost 90 percent of the overall group disagreed with the statement, “The US supports the spread of democracy because of a sincere desire to help Muslims” (Figure 38). Just 5.3 percent of the “religious” journalists gave any credence to that statement, while 76 percent of them completely disagreed, along with 52 percent of “secular” journalists and 66 percent of the undeclared.

FIGURE 36: TSUNAMI SUPPORT

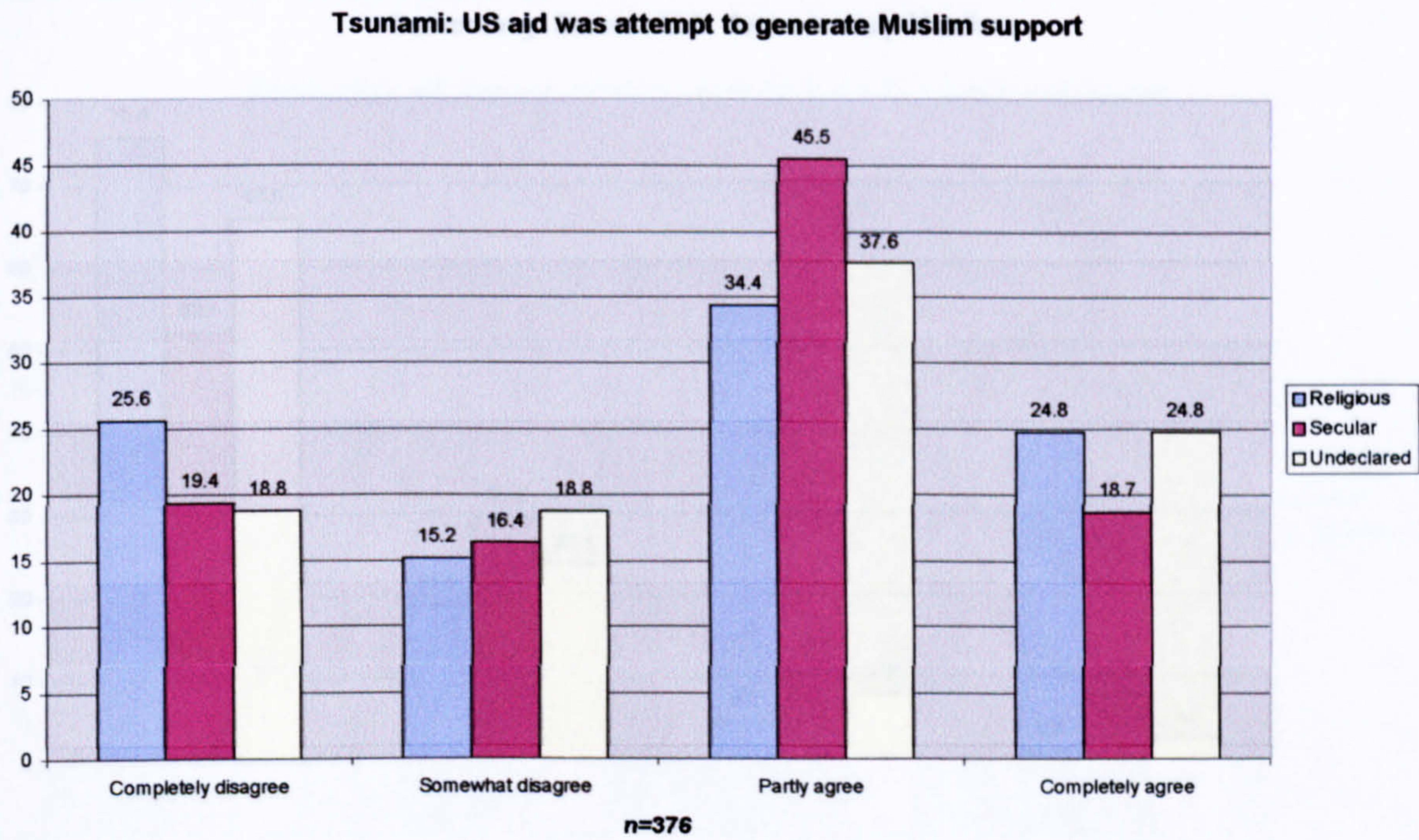


FIGURE 37: TSUNAMI AID NOBLE

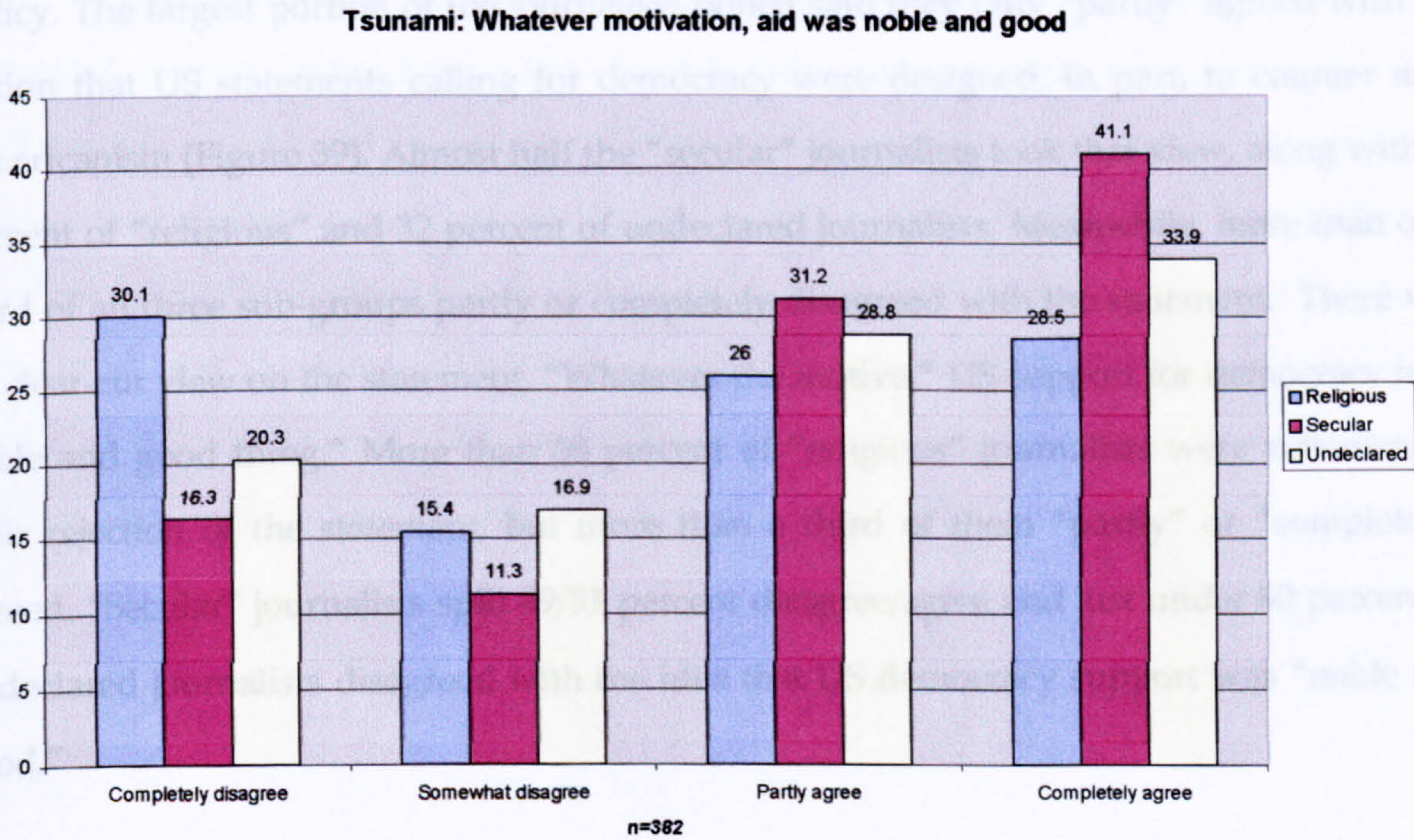
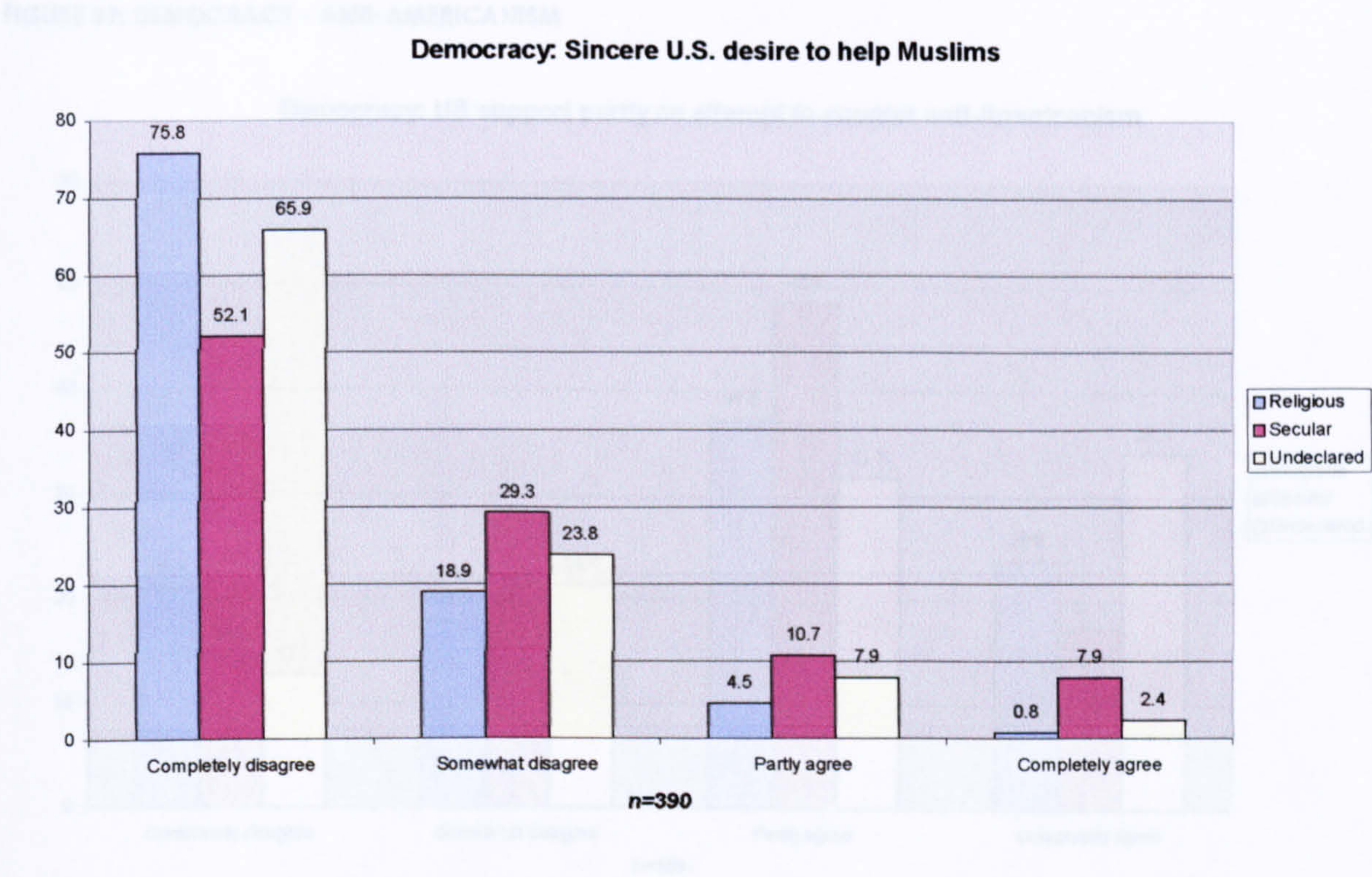
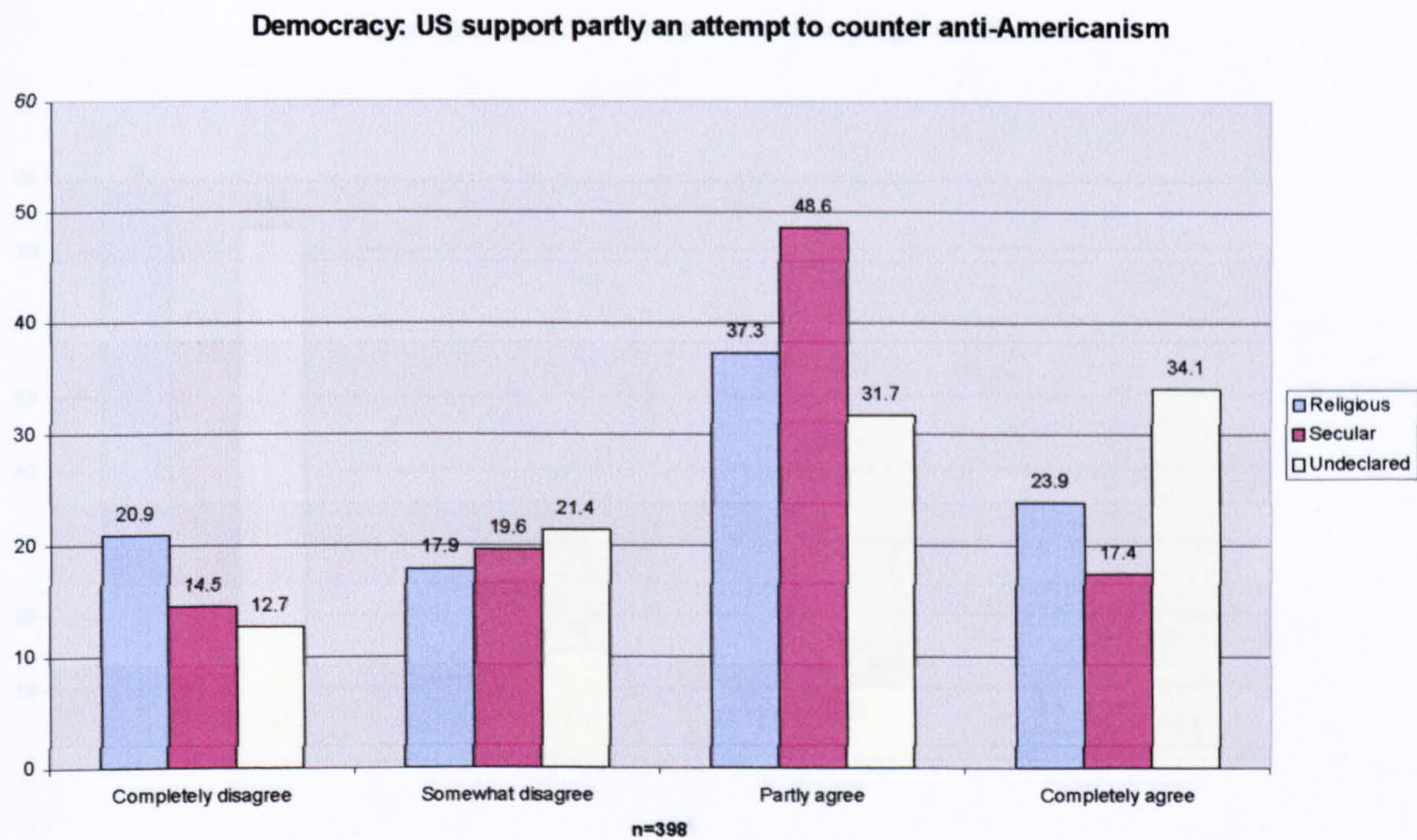


FIGURE 38: DEMOCRACY SINCERE



There was a willingness to accept that not all is black-and-white when it comes to US policy. The largest portion of the journalists polled said they only “partly” agreed with the notion that US statements calling for democracy were designed, in part, to counter anti-Americanism (Figure 39). Almost half the “secular” journalists took that view, along with 37 percent of “religious” and 32 percent of undeclared journalists. Meanwhile, more than one-third of all three sub-groups partly or completely disagreed with the statement. There was no clear-cut view on the statement, “Whatever the motive,” US support for democracy is “a noble and good thing.” More than 58 percent of “religious” journalists were vehement in their rejection of the statement, but more than a third of them “partly” or “completely” agreed. “Secular” journalists split 49/51 percent disagree/agree and just under 60 percent of undeclared journalists disagreed with the idea that US democracy support was “noble and good.”

FIGURE 39: DEMOCRACY - ANTI-AMERICANISM



Palestine: There was little difference in the stance of each of the sub-groups on the notion that stated US support for the creation of a Palestinian state reflects a “sincere desire to help the Palestinian people.” All three overwhelmingly disagreed, the only difference coming in the degree of disagreement (Figure 40). Seventy-eight percent of “religious” journalists said they “completely” disagreed that the US was trying to help the Palestinians, while a quarter of “secular” and 15 percent of undeclared journalists chose to “partly” disagree. Sixty-five percent of all journalists said the real motive was to reduce anti-Americanism in the region, with little difference among the sub-groups.

FIGURE 40: PALESTINIANS - US SINCERE

Question: Whether noble, noble and good

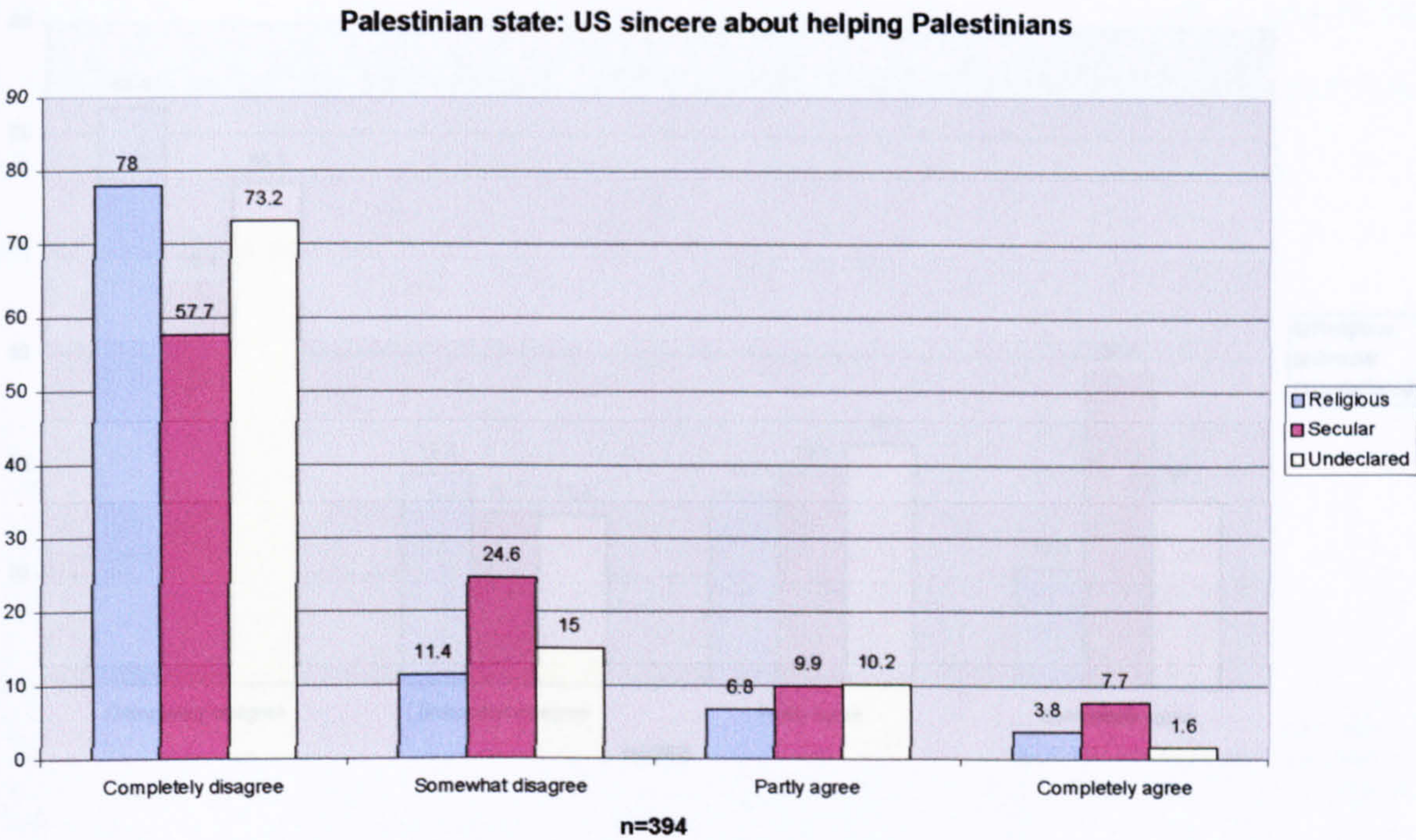


FIGURE 41: BUSH GENUINE

More than half the “religious” journalists “completely” disagreed with the suggestion that, no matter the motive, US support for a Palestinian state was “noble and good” (Figure 41). In contrast, almost 30 percent of “secular” journalists “completely” agreed the US policy was a good thing.

No matter whether they disagreed on the ultimate value, there was little debate among the journalists polled over the question of whether the Bush administration was “genuine in its expressed desire to create a Palestinian state.” The dominant view: No, it is not. Seventy-eight percent of “religious” journalists and more than 81 percent of “secular” journalists “completely” disagreed with the suggestion that the desire for a Palestinian state was genuine (Figure 42). Only the “secular” journalists showed any willingness to consider that possibility, with 22 percent saying they “partly” or “completely” agreed.

“Secular” journalists were slightly more willing to negotiate over the controversial question of whether Palestinians who fled what is now Israel will eventually be allowed to return to their ancestral homes (Figure 43). A third of “secular” journalists and slightly fewer undeclared journalists said the issue can be negotiated as part of a comprehensive peace

FIGURE 41: PALESTINE POLICY - NOBLE

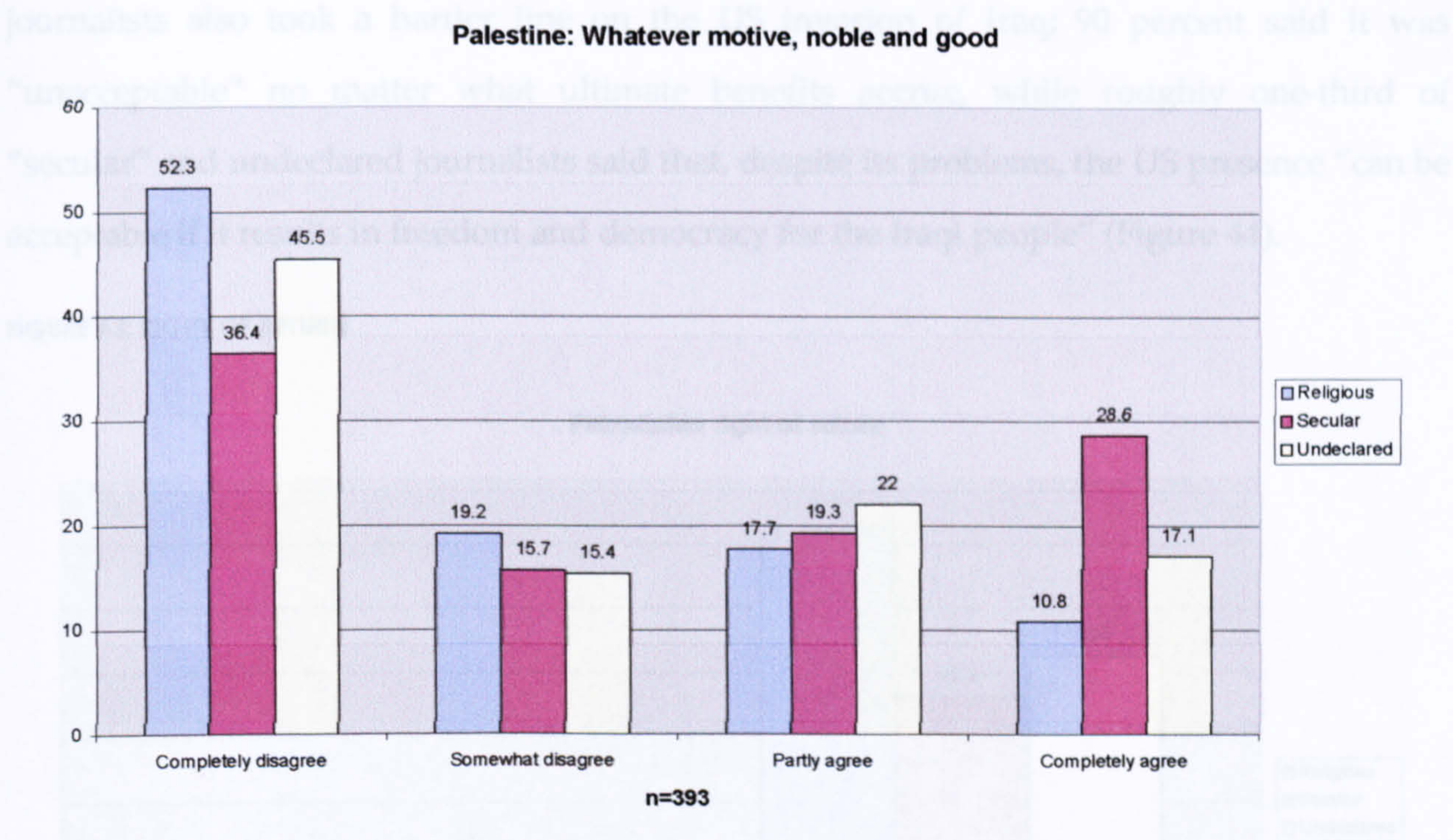
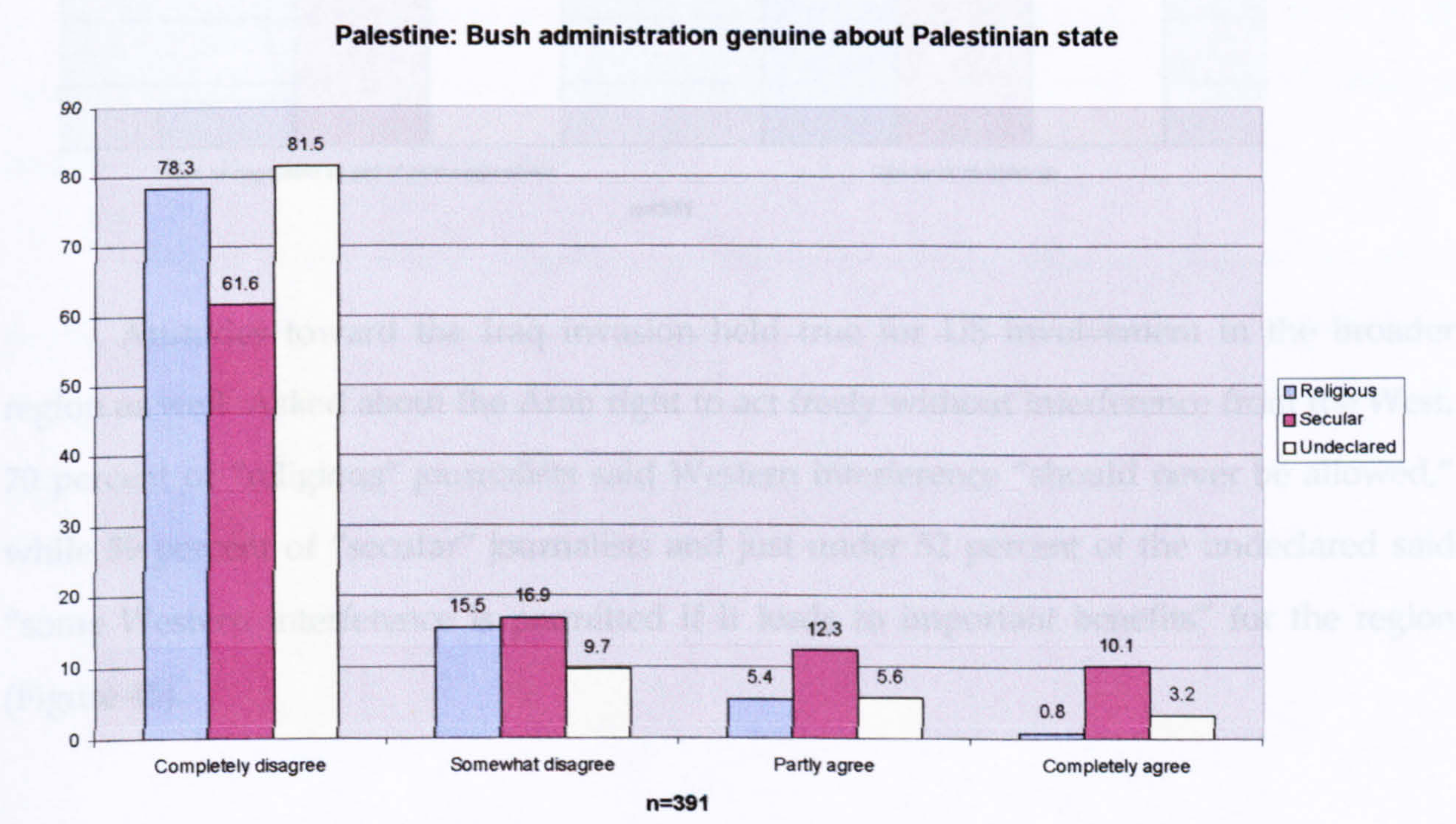


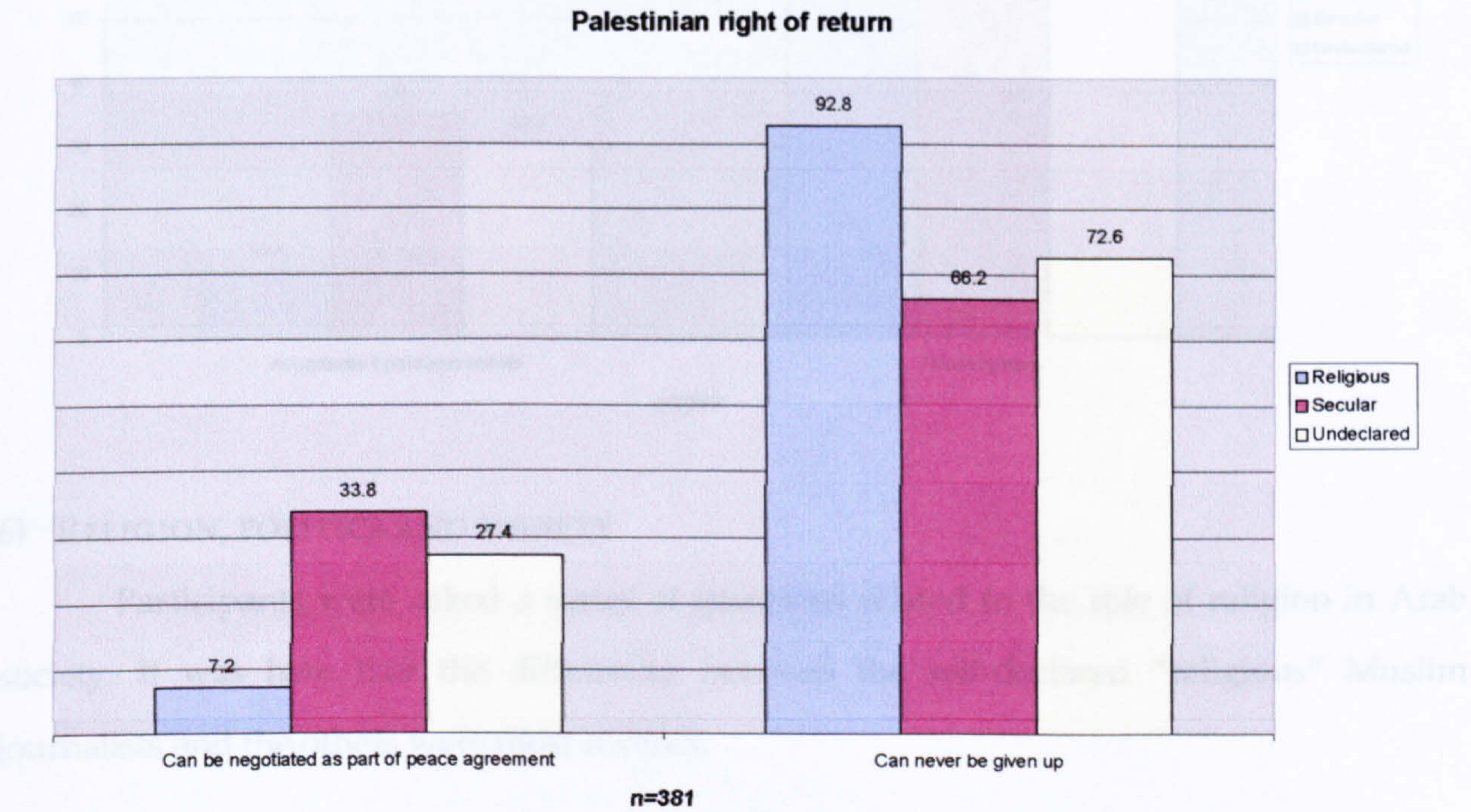
FIGURE 42: BUSH GENUINE



“Secular” journalists were slightly more willing to negotiate over the controversial question of whether Palestinians who fled what is now Israel will eventually be allowed to return to their ancestral homes (Figure 43). A third of “secular” journalists and slightly fewer undeclared journalists said the issue can be negotiated as part of a comprehensive peace

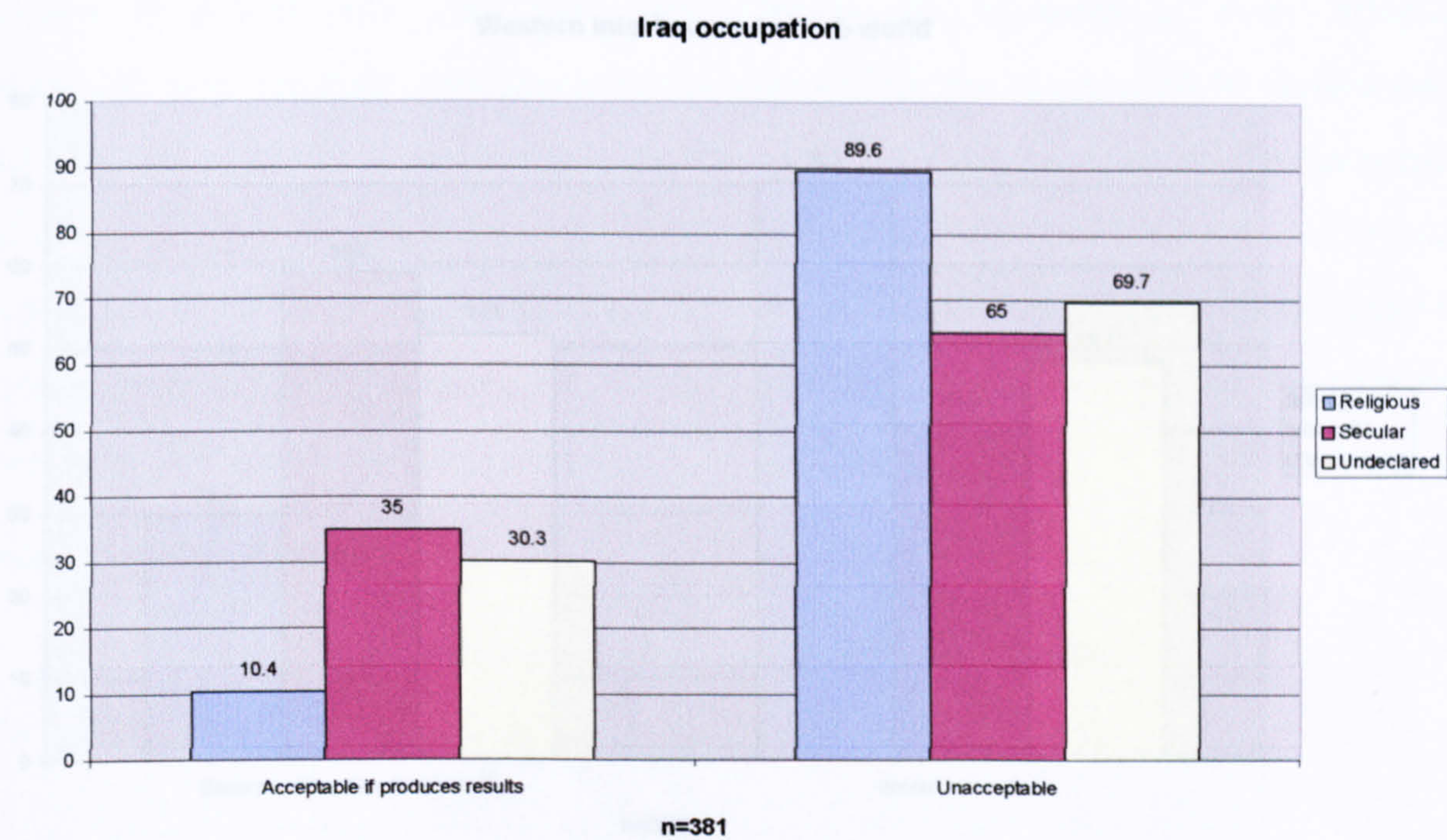
agreement, and idea rejected by 93 percent of the “religious” journalists. “Religious” journalists also took a harder line on the US invasion of Iraq; 90 percent said it was “unacceptable” no matter what ultimate benefits accrue, while roughly one-third of “secular” and undeclared journalists said that, despite its problems, the US presence “can be acceptable if it results in freedom and democracy for the Iraqi people” (Figure 44).

FIGURE 43: RIGHT OF RETURN



Attitudes toward the Iraq invasion held true for US involvement in the broader region as well. Asked about the Arab right to act freely without interference from the West, 70 percent of “religious” journalists said Western interference “should never be allowed,” while 59 percent of “secular” journalists and just under 52 percent of the undeclared said “some Western interference is permitted if it leads to important benefits” for the region (Figure 45).

FIGURE 44: IRAQ OCCUPATION



6) RELIGION, POLITICS AND SOCIETY

Participants were asked a series of questions related to the role of religion in Arab society. It was here that the differences between the self-declared “religious” Muslim journalists and the others were most distinct.

Clerics: When asked whether, generally speaking, religious authorities were providing adequate answers to the moral problems of the individual, almost 59 percent of “religious” journalists said “yes,” while almost 74 percent of “secular” journalists and 56 percent of undeclared journalists chose “no” (Figure 46).

FIGURE 45: WESTERN INTERFERENCE

Western interference in Arab world

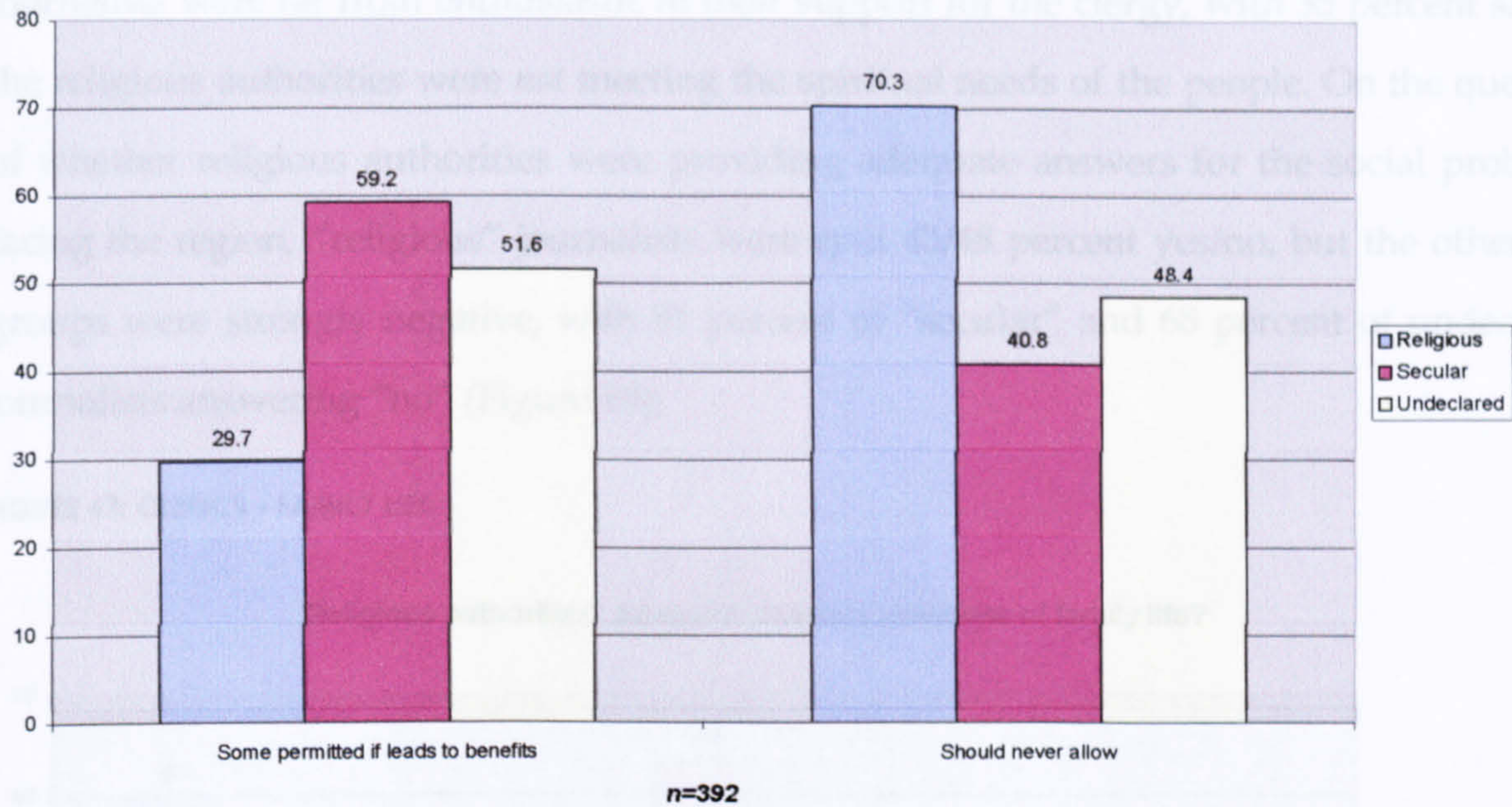
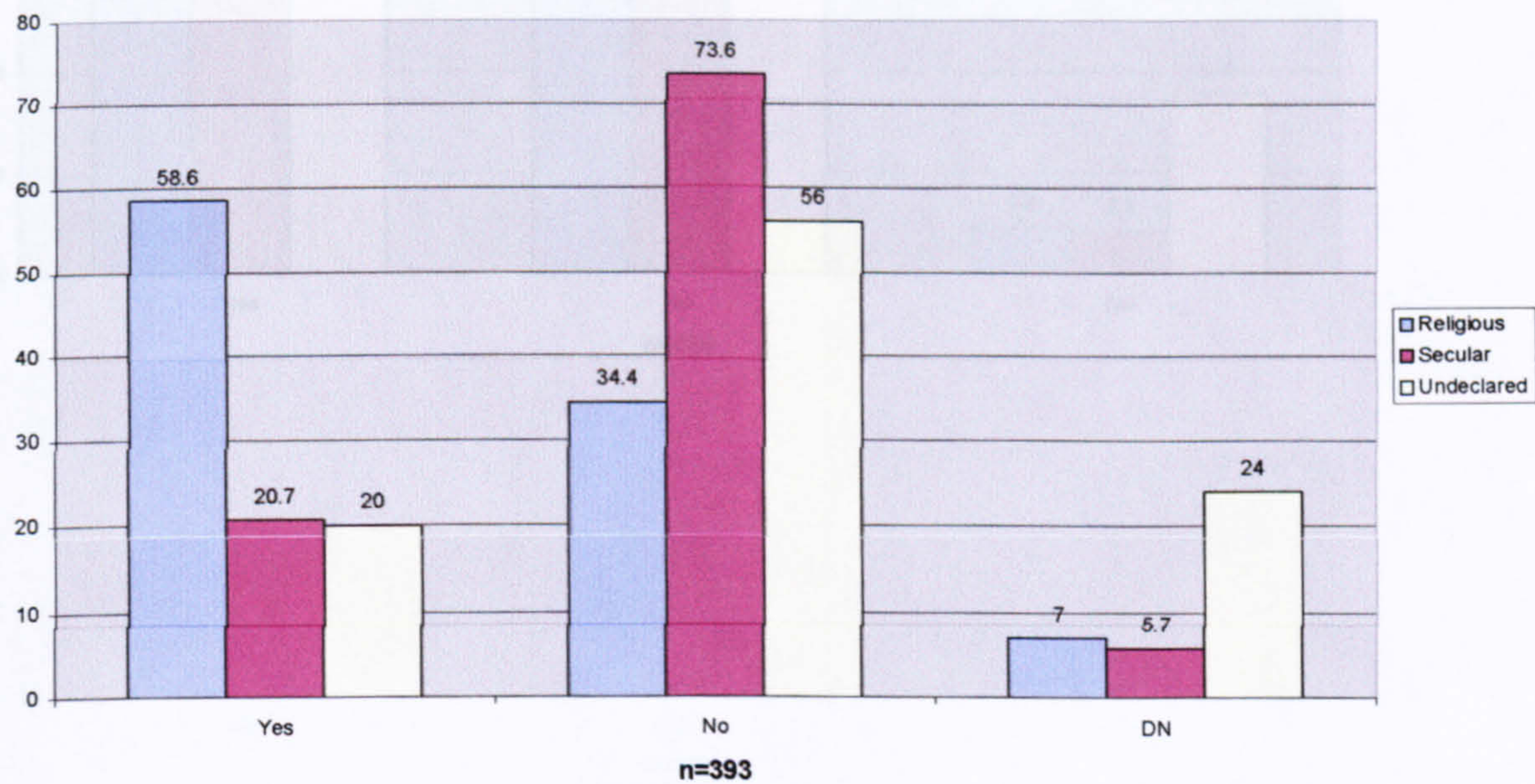


FIGURE 46: CLERICS - MORAL PROBLEMS

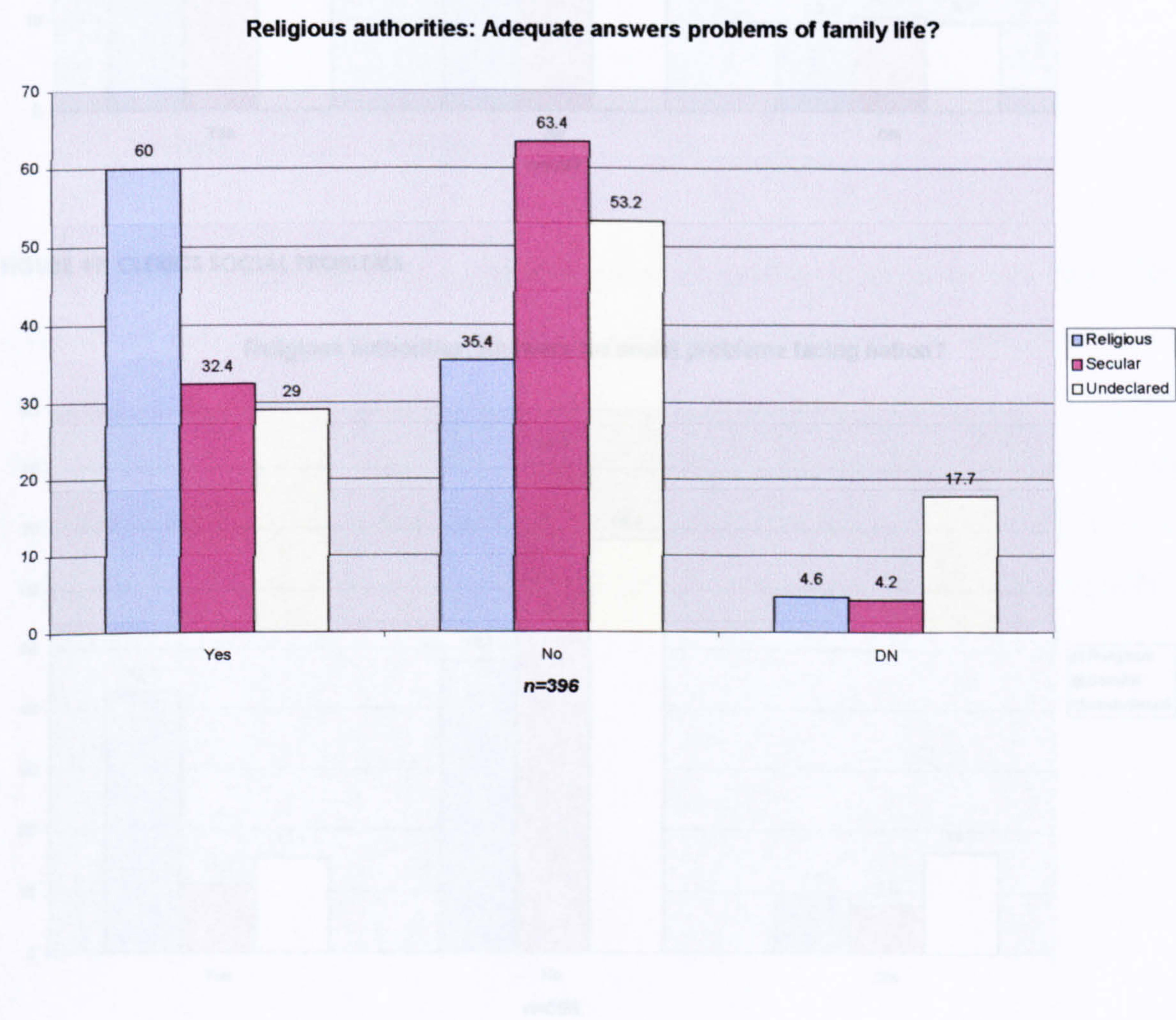
Generally speaking, do religious authorities give answers to moral problems and needs of the individual?



A similar pattern could be seen on the question of whether the clerics were addressing the problems of family life, with 60 percent of “religious” journalists saying they were and 63 percent of “secular” and 53 percent of undeclared selecting “no”(Figure 47). The gap was less pronounced on the question of whether the clerics are meeting the spiritual

needs of the public, but even there 50 percent of “secular” journalists said they were not (versus 39 percent who said they were) (Figure 48). Interestingly, even “religious” journalists were far from enthusiastic in their support for the clergy, with 35 percent saying the religious authorities were *not* meeting the spiritual needs of the people. On the question of whether religious authorities were providing adequate answers for the social problems facing the region, “religious” journalists were split 43/48 percent yes/no, but the other two groups were strongly negative, with 81 percent of “secular” and 68 percent of undeclared journalists answering “no” (Figure 49).

FIGURE 47: CLERICS - FAMILY LIFE



Most Values “Religious” journalists hold a view diametrically opposite that of their colleagues on the issue of whether belief in God is a requirement in order to have good moral values. Fifty percent of them said belief in God is necessary, while about the same percentage of “secular” and undeclared journalists indicated it is not (Figure 50).

FIGURE 48: CLERICS - SPIRITUAL NEEDS

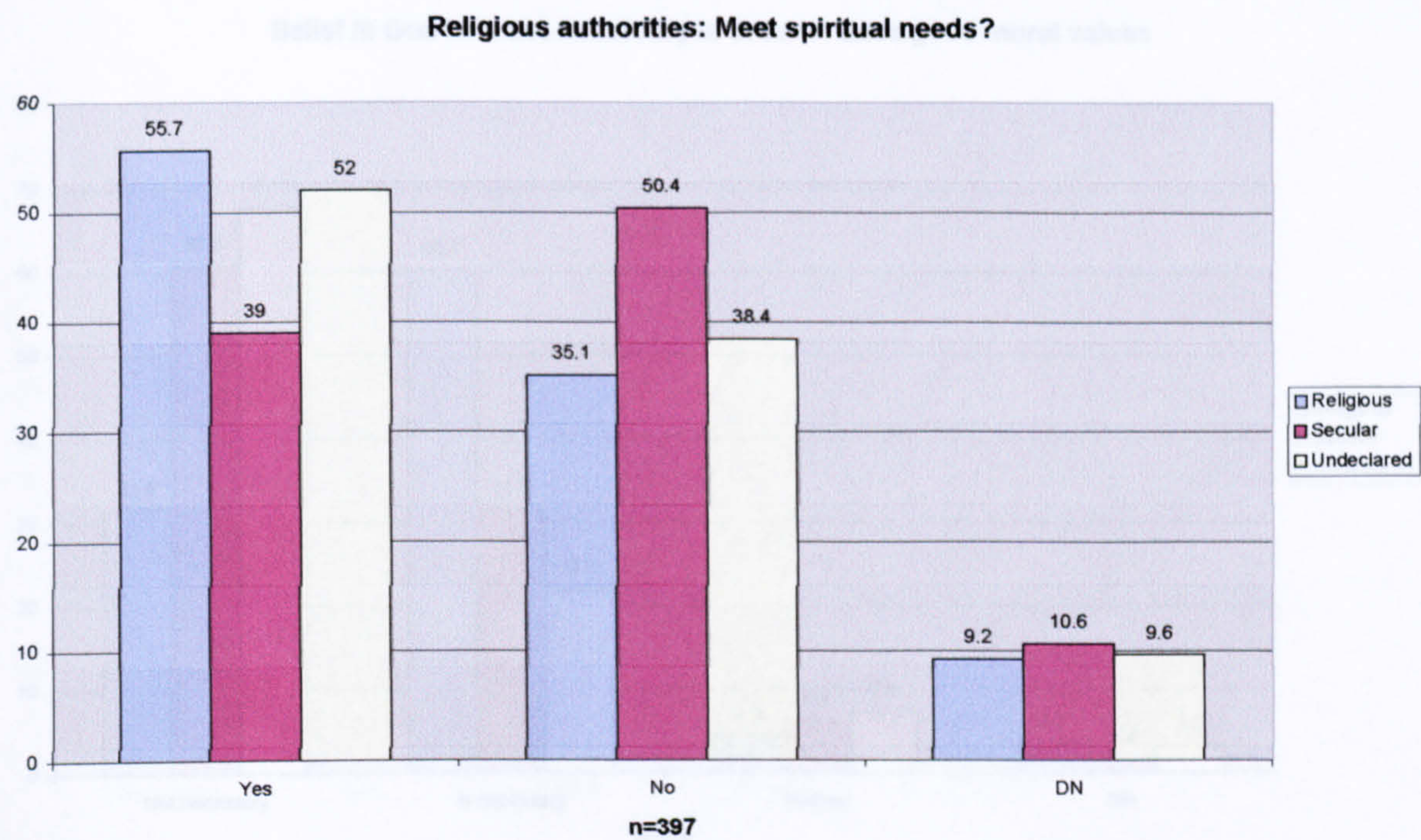
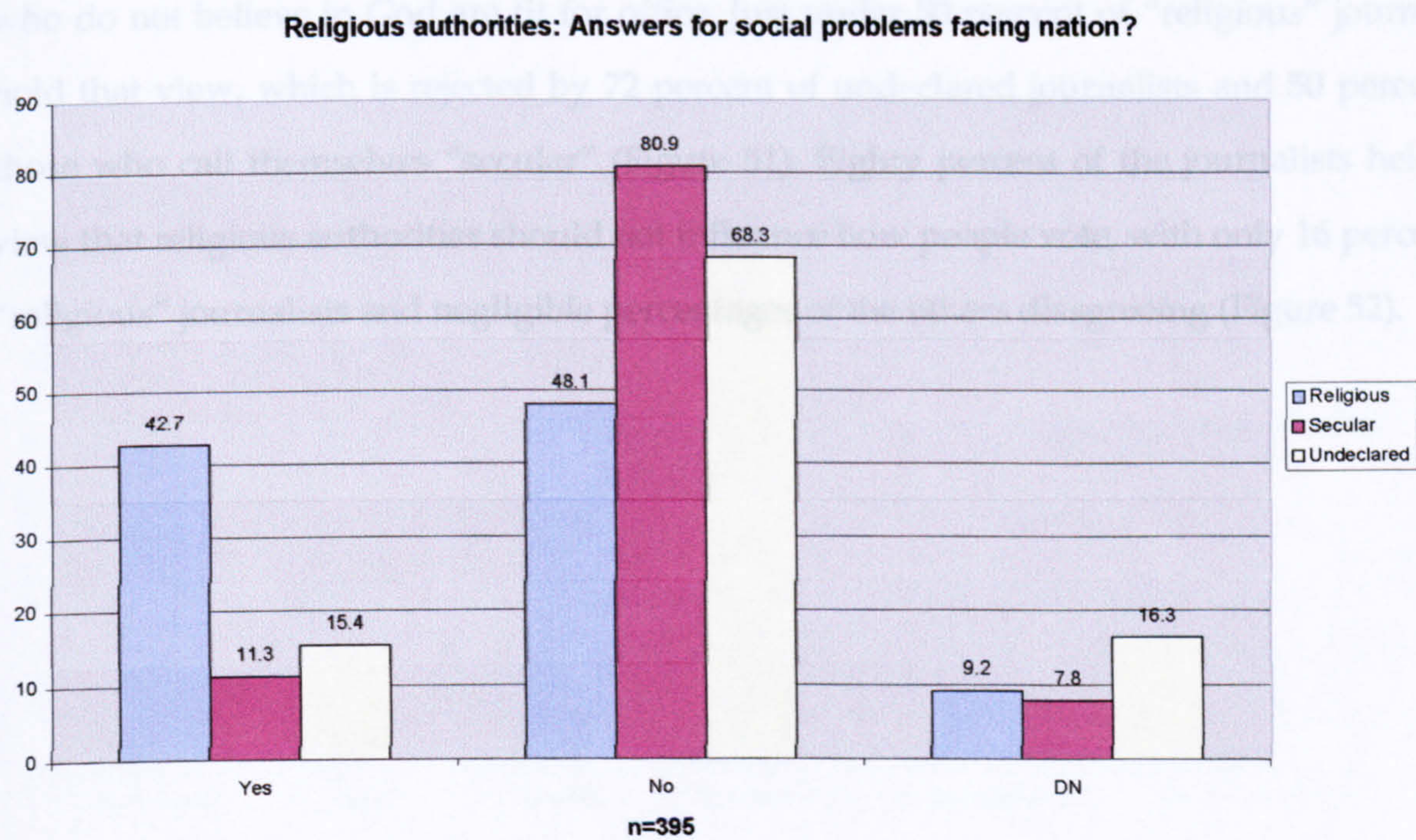
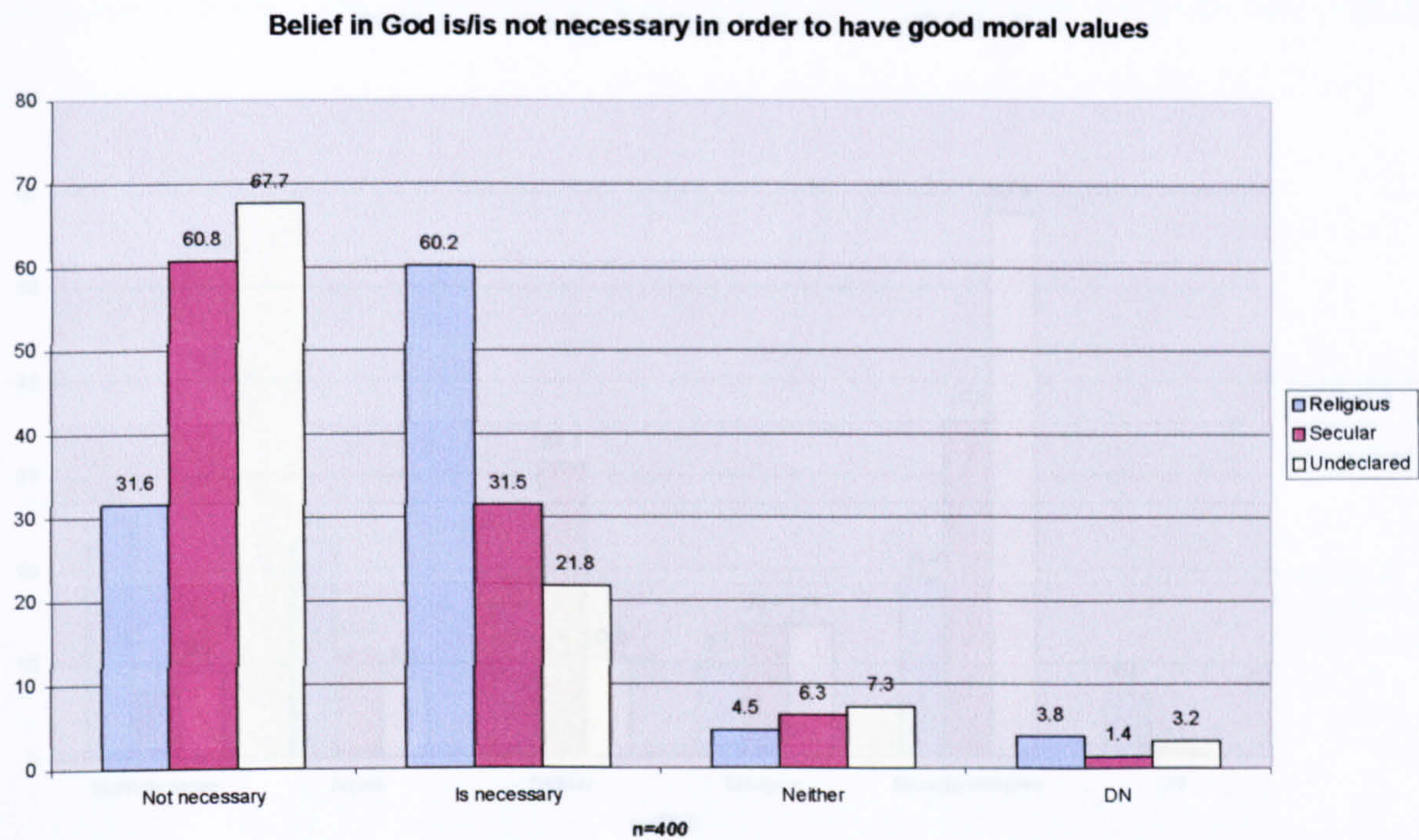


FIGURE 49: CLERICS SOCIAL PROBLEMS



Moral Values: “Religious” journalists hold a view diametrically opposite that of their colleagues on the issue of whether belief in God is a requirement in order to have good moral values. Sixty percent of them said belief in God is necessary, while about the same percentage of “secular” and undeclared journalists indicated it is not (Figure 50).

FIGURE 50: GOD & MORAL VALUES



God & Politics: There is equal disagreement on the question of whether politicians who do not believe in God are fit for office. Just under 50 percent of “religious” journalists hold that view, which is rejected by 72 percent of undeclared journalists and 50 percent of those who call themselves “secular” (Figure 51). Eighty percent of the journalists held the view that religious authorities should not influence how people vote, with only 16 percent of “religious” journalists and negligible percentages of the others disagreeing (Figure 52).

FIGURE 51: POLITICIANS & GOD

Politicians who don't believe in God are unfit for office

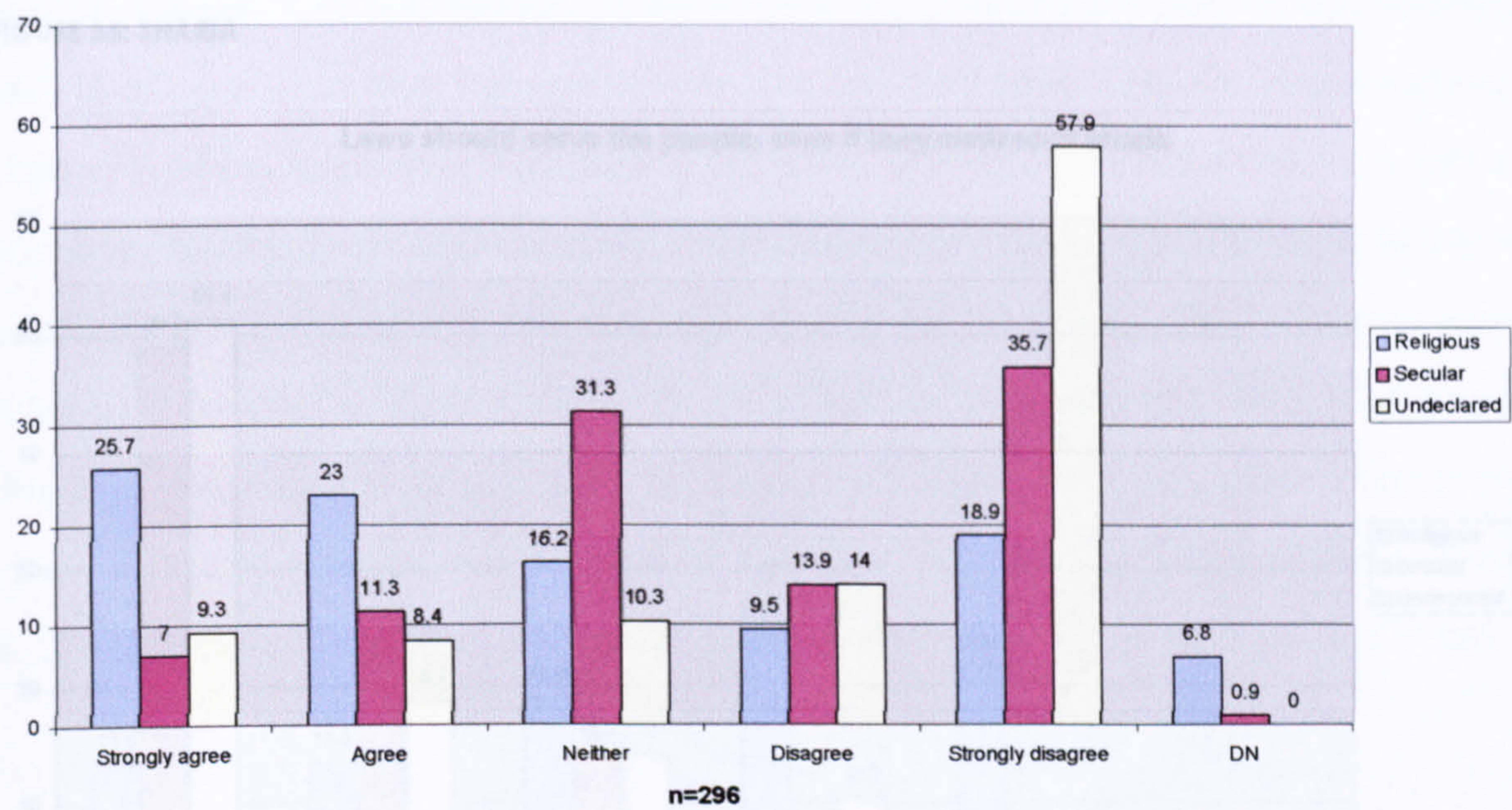
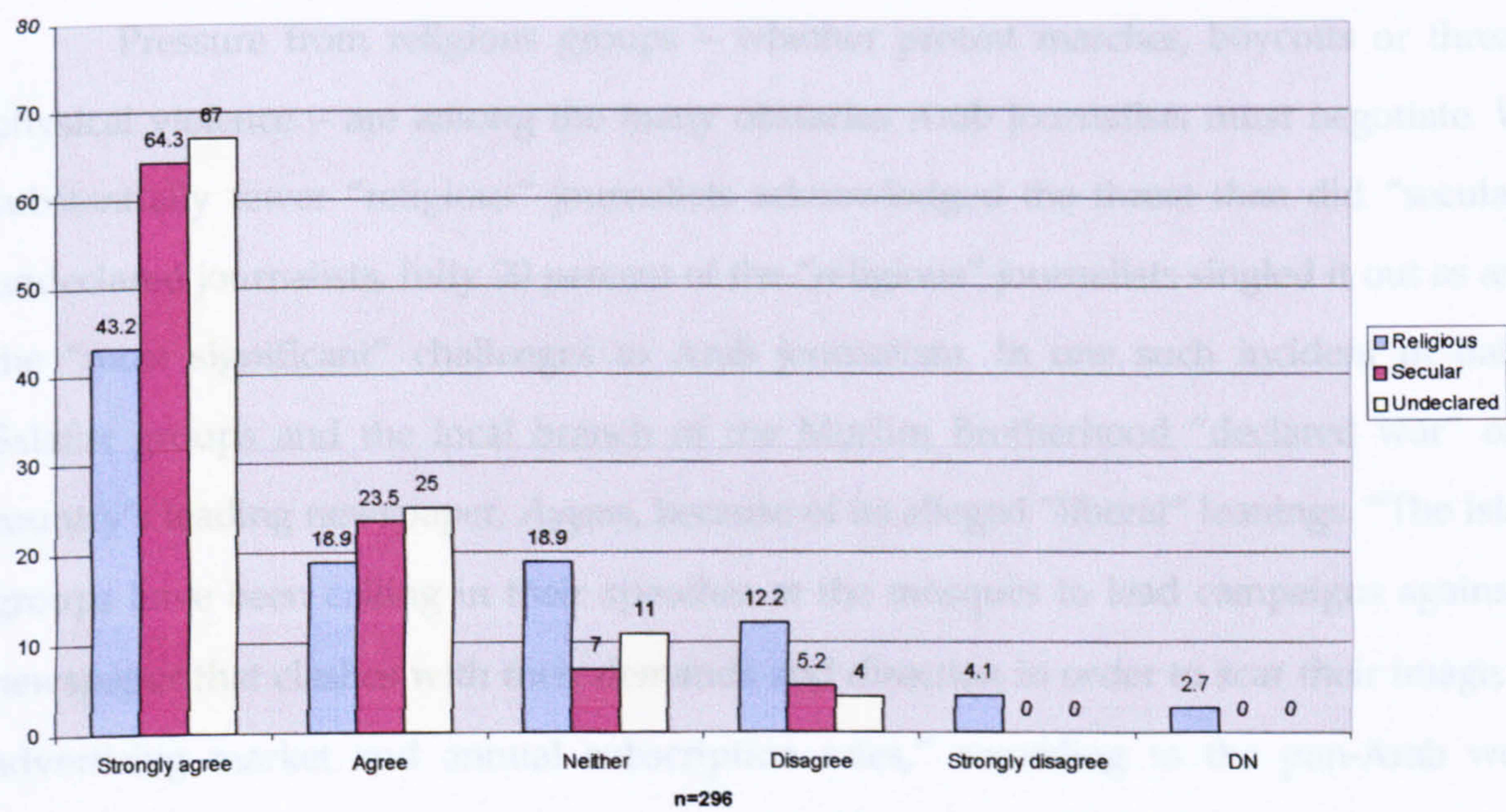


FIGURE 52: CLERICS & VOTING

Religious leaders should not influence how people vote

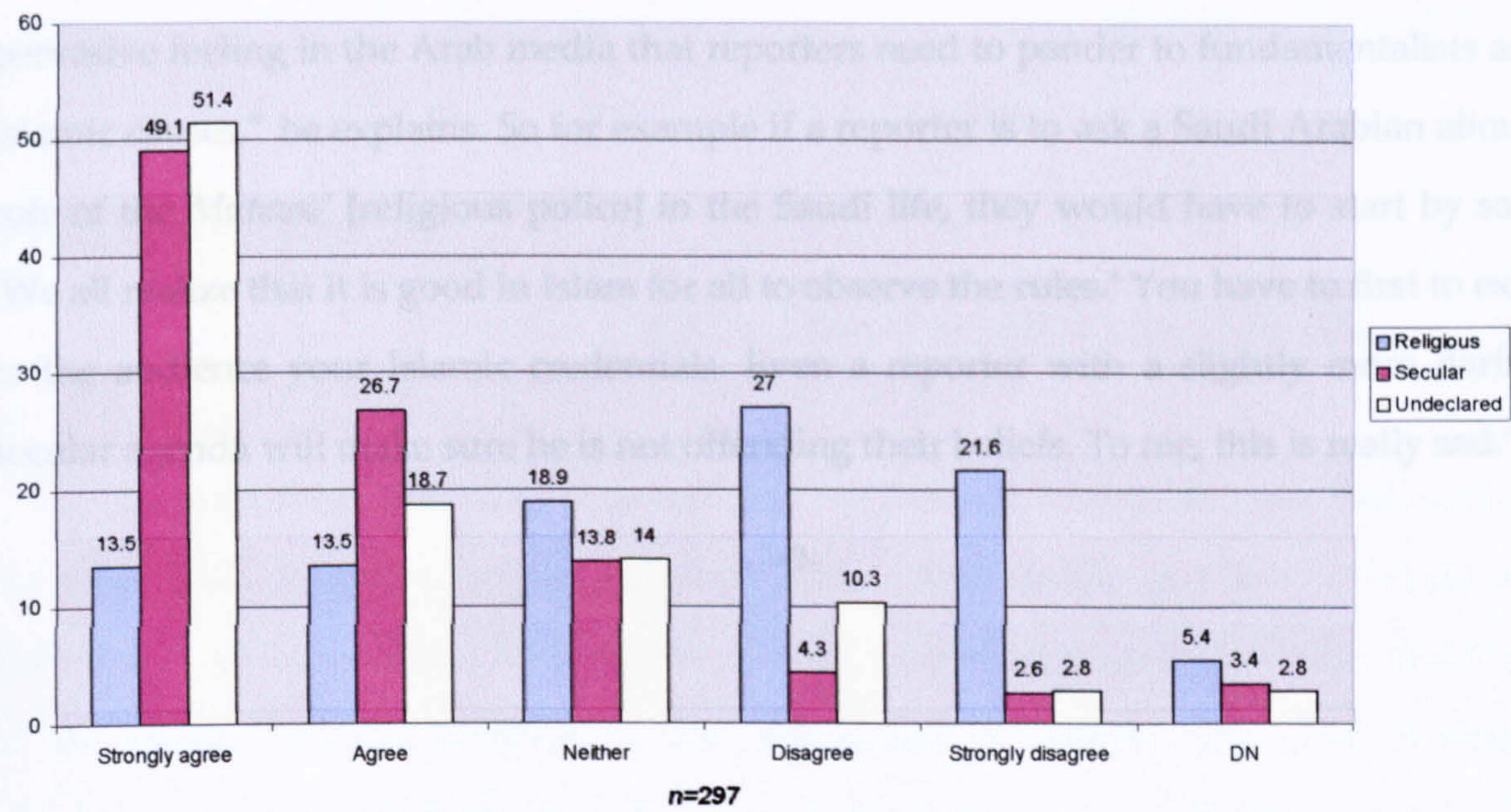


There was significant difference in how the three sub-groups replied to the statement, "Government should make laws according to the wishes of the people, even if they contradict *sharia*." Just under half the "religious" journalists disagreed with that

statement (and 27 percent agreed), while 76 percent of “secular” and 70 percent of undeclared rejected the idea that national laws must be dictated by religious law (Figure 53).

FIGURE 53: SHARIA

Laws should serve the people, even if they contradict sharia



Pressure from religious groups – whether protest marches, boycotts or threats of physical violence – are among the many obstacles Arab journalists must negotiate. While substantially fewer “religious” journalists acknowledged the threat than did “secular” or undeclared journalists, fully 20 percent of the “religious” journalists singled it out as among the “most significant” challenges to Arab journalism. In one such incident in Bahrain, Salafist groups and the local branch of the Muslim Brotherhood “declared war” on the country’s leading newspaper, *Ayyam*, because of its alleged “liberal” leanings. “The Islamist groups have been calling in their speeches at the mosques to lead campaigns against any newspaper that clashes with their demands and direction in order to scar their image, their advertising market and annual subscription rates,” according to the pan-Arab website *elaph.com*.¹⁰¹¹ Halfway around the world, the chief editor of the radio station Kantor Berita Radio 68 H told this writer that his newsroom had repeatedly been stormed by Islamists angry at the station’s reporting. Othman al-Sini of *Al-Watan* says that in Saudi Arabia, the greatest pressure on the media comes not from the government, but from reactionary elements of society. “If I write an article about the war in Iraq, about what the terrorists are

doing there, I find a lot of people against me,” he explains. “If I talk about reform or enlightening I find a lot of people they are against this. If I write one about women driving cars or cinemas, I do not find any problem from the government. But the conservatives are very deaf people, so they fight us.”¹⁰¹² Fear of backlash from religious conservatives, says Hassan Ibrahim, leads to self-censorship on issues of religion. “I believe there is still a very pervasive feeling in the Arab media that reporters need to pander to fundamentalists and to Islamic causes,” he explains. So for example if a reporter is to ask a Saudi Arabian about the role of the *Mutawa'* [religious police] in the Saudi life, they would have to start by saying, ‘We all realize that it is good in Islam for all to observe the rules.’ You have to first to explain to the audience your Islamic credentials. Even a reporter with a slightly more daring or secular agenda will make sure he is not offending their beliefs. To me, this is really sad.”¹⁰¹³

CHAPTER XII: ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

"Only tribes held together by group feeling can live in the desert."

IBN KHALDUN
*THE MUQADDIMAH*¹⁰¹⁴

RESEARCH QUESTION 1:

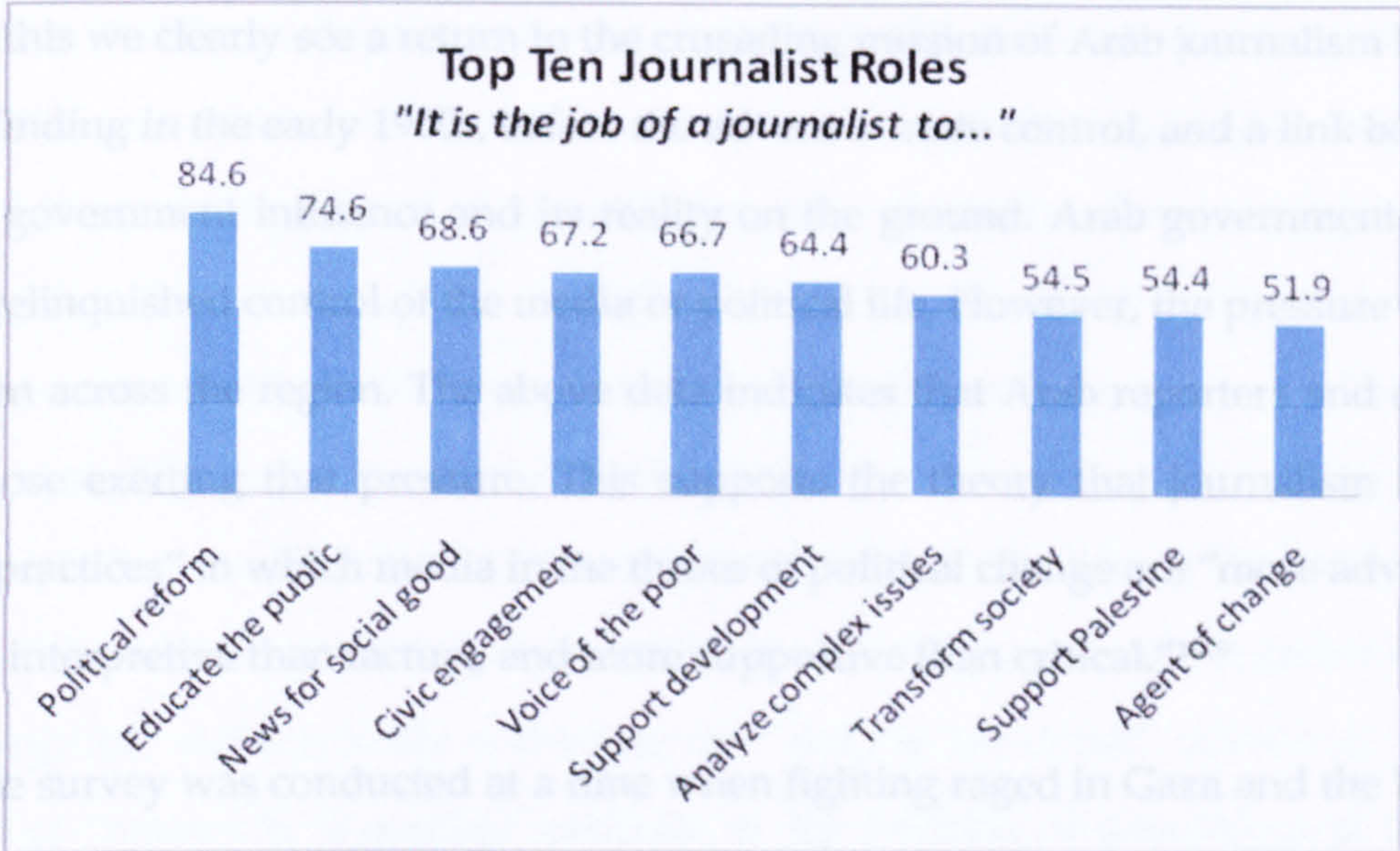
WHAT DO ARAB JOURNALISTS SEE AS THEIR PRIMARY MISSION?

1) OVERVIEW

Modern Arab news organizations and the modern Arab state were both born from the ashes of the Ottoman Empire. As noted earlier, Arab media have been a vehicle for the spread of Arab nationalism, Arab culture and the Arabic language itself.¹⁰¹⁵ But, since the era of government control dawned in the mid-twentieth century, the chief professional allegiance of most Arab journalists has been to the individual nation-state – not the “Arab nation” as a whole – and their primary mission has been to support the status quo. This survey finds that mission is changing.

While only about half of all journalists surveyed specifically identified “agent of change” as among the most important journalistic roles, the reality is that nine of the top ten roles they *did* most often identify (Figure 54) are all functions of change or agenda setting: 1) encourage political reform (86 percent); 2) educate the public (76 percent); 3) use news for the social good (69 percent); 4) encourage civic engagement (67 percent); 5) serve as a voice for the poor (67 percent); 6) support development (64 percent); 7) transform Arab society (55 percent); and 8) agent of change (52 percent). Only “analyze complex issues” and “support the Palestinian cause” do not naturally fall within the agenda-setting category. The first is an interpretive role and the second involves support for a long-standing Arab priority.

FIGURE 54: TOP 10 JOURNALIST ROLES



N=517

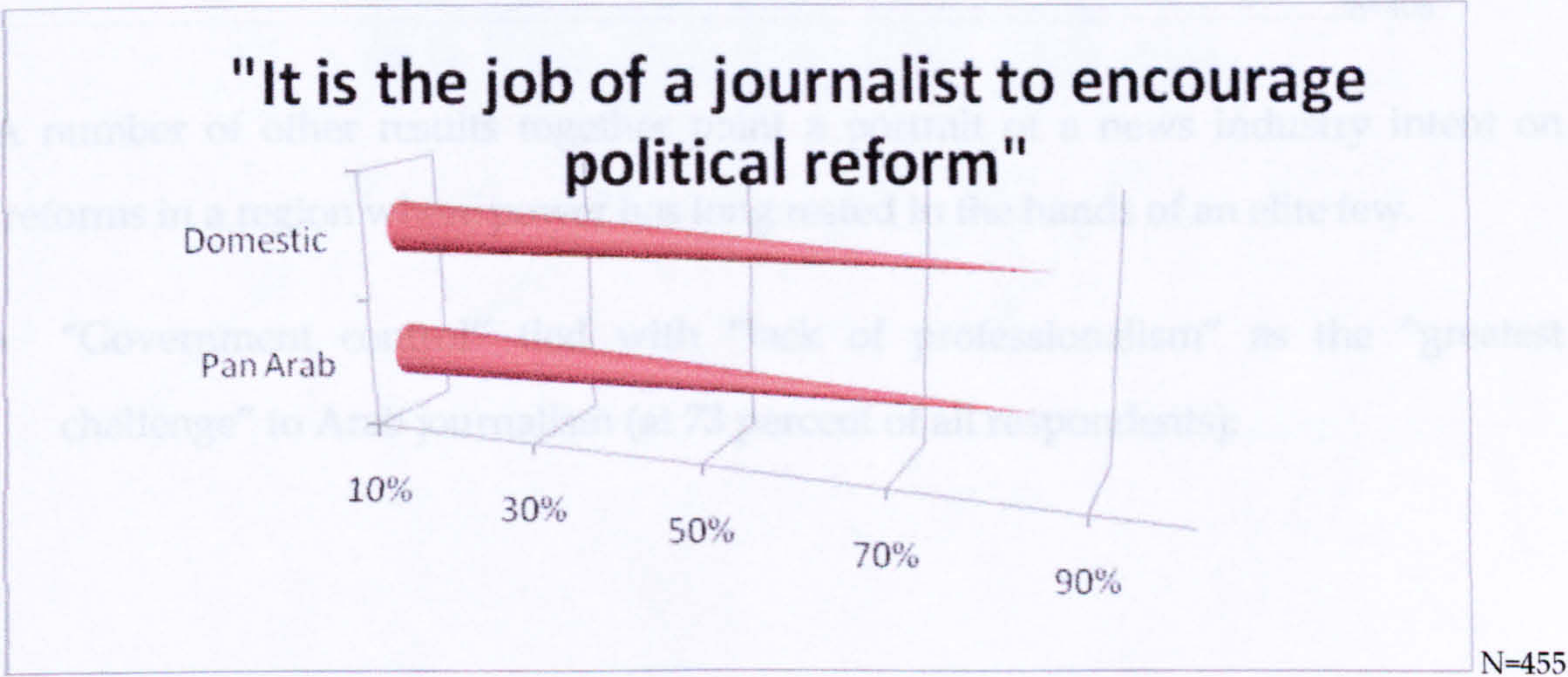
Since the founding of Al-Jazeera, its staffers have seen themselves as agents of democratic change in a region trapped in the grip of autocracies.¹⁰¹⁶ That was a key reason, as noted earlier, that the channel’s reporters have been expelled from so many Arab countries.¹⁰¹⁷ So it is no surprise that they would see it as their job to drive political change. However, the other leading cross-border news organizations – Al-Arabiya television and the largest newspapers, *Al-Hayat* and *Asharq Al-Awsat* – are all controlled by Saudi interests. It is therefore noteworthy that 84 percent of respondents working for pan-Arab news organizations identified encouraging political reform as their most important journalistic priority (Figure 55). But it is even more significant that about the same number of journalists working for purely domestic media – traditionally defenders of their respective regimes – also said it was their job to shake up the status quo. “The role of the media in shaping public debate and covering politics is one of the most important concerns facing journalists today,” according to Saudi journalist Samar Fatany. “[It is] [o]ur mission ... to mobilize and move the public debate toward positive attitudes and global thinking — dire needs for the progress and development of our country.”¹⁰¹⁸

This tells us that the aspiration for change is not limited to “elite” news organizations, those media organizations at which change fits the “corporate” agenda (be that driven by extra-media political factors or a business sense that ‘change sells’), or those

organizations that reach across borders. Rather, it is an organic view that permeates Arab media. In this we clearly see a return to the crusading mission of Arab journalism McFadden reported finding in the early 1950s, before the advent of state control, and a link between the theory of government influence and its reality on the ground. Arab governments certainly have not relinquished control of the media or political life. However, the pressure for reform can be seen across the region. The above data indicates that Arab reporters and editors are among those exerting that pressure. This supports the theory that journalism is a set of “cultural practices” in which media in the throes of political change are “more advocate than impartial, interpretive than factual, and more supportive than critical.”¹⁰¹⁹

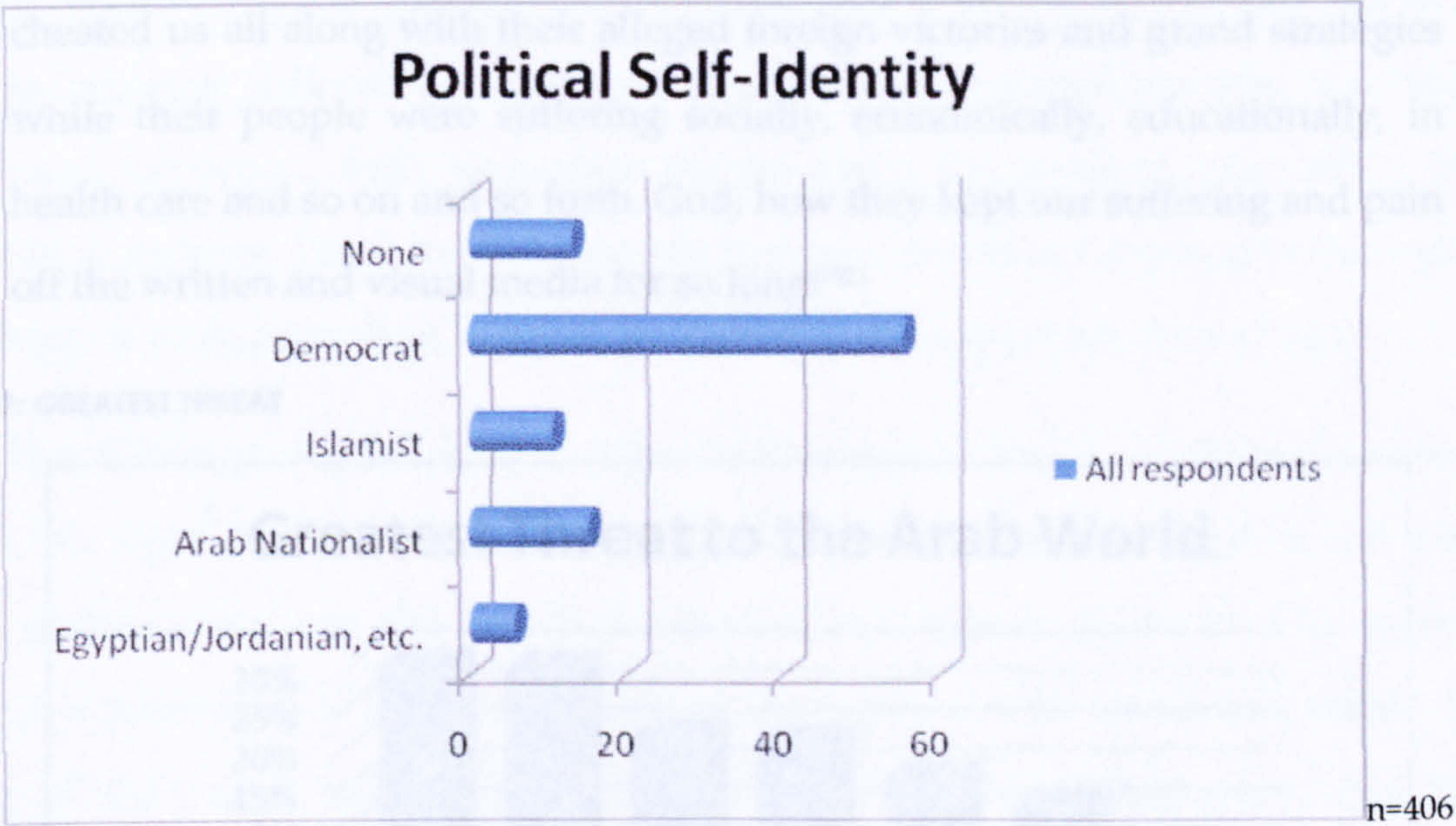
The survey was conducted at a time when fighting raged in Gaza and the West Bank between Israel and the Palestinians and the US was leading an international boycott against the Hamas government. The fact that support for the Palestinian cause barely made it to the top ten self-described journalistic roles belies the perception in the West that opposition to Israel and US Palestine policy are the overriding priorities of Arab journalism. The Other may play a critical role in shaping identity, according to nationalism theory, but, as indicated in the data, that Other is not necessarily foreign. The survey responses tell us that their sense of defensiveness in the face of their own governments shapes the identity of Arab journalists as significantly as their defensiveness in the face of American and Israeli tanks. This inevitably has an impact on how Arab journalists “frame” stories about those same governments, which theories of media impact indicate then has a resonating effect on the Arab public.¹⁰²⁰

FIGURE 55: POLITICAL REFORM



Equally noteworthy is the fact that the majority of journalists surveyed identify themselves politically as “democrat” – as opposed to “Arab nationalist,” “nationalist” of their respective countries, or “Islamist” – a label that, by definition, means they favor the concept of democratic political change (Figure 56), which the Bush administration was advocating at the time,, though the journalists were not necessarily in favor of the precise style of government official Washington had in mind. Here we see the journalists breaking out of the straightjacket of the old labels that defined much of the past century – Islamist, nationalist, Arab nationalist. Yet at the same time, they are identifying themselves with the kind of goal-based non-sectarian patriotism to which their professional ancestor Boutros al-Boustani aspired and implicitly endorsing the “natural freedoms” advocated by Islamic Modernist al-Tahtawi. It is another indicator of the blurring of psychological boundaries found in the new Arabism.

FIGURE 56: POLITICAL SELF-IDENTITY



A number of other results together paint a portrait of a news industry intent on driving reforms in a region where power has long rested in the hands of an elite few.

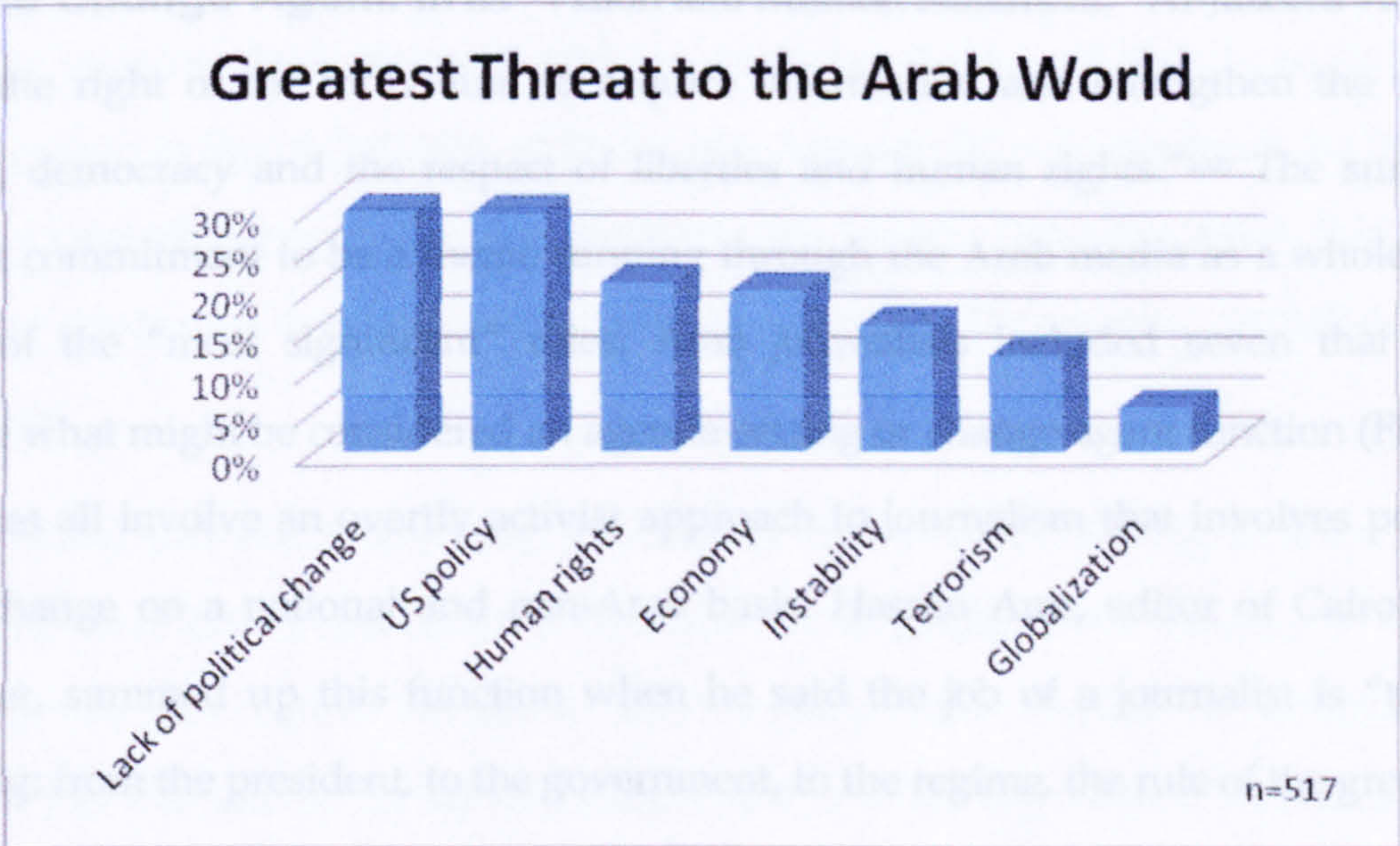
- “Government control” tied with “lack of professionalism” as the “greatest challenge” to Arab journalism (at 73 percent of all respondents);

- Political reform (54 percent), poverty (52 percent) and human rights (50 percent) were ranked as the top three issues facing the Arab world today, far ahead of Palestine (36 percent), Iraq (31 percent) and terrorism (33 percent);
- “Lack of political change” effectively tied with “US policy” (at 30 percent) as the greatest threats to the Arab world, when the ever-present specter of Israel was excluded, followed by “human rights abuses” and the “economy” (Figure 57).

While the perceived external threat presented by the US, Israel and their European allies remained grist for the daily news mill across the region, many Arab journalists agreed with Faisal Kasim, host of Al-Jazeera’s popular – and controversial – talk show *Al Ittijiah al Mou’akes* (*The Opposite Direction*), who decried the state of the region and its media:

God, how our leaders deceived us over the decades – if not centuries – with their rotten dehumanized world view! God, how their media organs have cheated us all along with their alleged foreign victories and grand strategies while their people were suffering socially, economically, educationally, in health care and so on and so forth. God, how they kept our suffering and pain off the written and visual media for so long!¹⁰²¹

FIGURE 57: GREATEST THREAT



2) A NEW JOURNALISTIC TYPOLOGY

Through the years, researchers have developed a variety of typologies to categorize media in the Arab world and elsewhere. Rugh's typologies identified the primary trends by country – e.g. “mobilization” press controlled by revolutionary regimes in places like Syria and Iraq; the “loyalist” press in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf; and the “diverse” press of Lebanon, Kuwait, Morocco and Yemen.¹⁰²² Other researchers have created typologies of the journalists themselves, rather than the media for which they work. For Weaver et al, those categories changed slightly over the decades, but by the time of their 2002 survey they had identified four dominant functional classifications into which US journalists were grouped: “Interpretative,” “Disseminator,” “Adversarial,” and “Popular Mobilizer.”¹⁰²³ In a series of surveys conducted in the developing world by Jyotika Ramaprasad and various research partners, the teams developed an alternative set of functional groupings that took into account the “development journalism” worldview of reporters and editors in Nepal, Tanzania, Bangladesh and Egypt.¹⁰²⁴ The titles changed in the various studies, but the broad functions included national development, education, information/analysis, entertainment, culture and advocacy. Arab journalists cannot easily be grouped into either of these classification systems. From the data emerge two new functional typologies that epitomize the mission of Arab journalism today as perceived by the journalists themselves.

The Change Agent: In its “Vision and Mission Statement,” Al-Jazeera vows to “to support the right of the individual to acquire information and strengthen the values of tolerance, democracy and the respect of liberties and human rights.”¹⁰²⁵ The survey data finds that commitment to be a theme running through the Arab media as a whole. In their ranking of the “most significant” roles, Arab journalists included seven that together constitute what might be considered an agenda-setting or change-agent function (Figure 58). These roles all involve an overtly activist approach to journalism that involves political or societal change on a national and pan-Arab basis. Hassan Amr, editor of Cairo's *Al-Fajr* newspaper, summed up this function when he said the job of a journalist is “to change everything; from the president, to the government, to the regime, the rule of the ground.”¹⁰²⁶

FIGURE 58: CHANGE AGENT

<i>Change Agent</i> ¹⁰²⁷	
Encourage political reform	84.6%
Use news for the social good	68.5%
Encourage civic engagement	67.2%
Support national/regional development	64.4%
Transform Arab society	54.5%
Agents of change	51.9%
Serve as voice of the poor	66.7%
Adversary of the government	21.1%

N=517

The overwhelming majority of Arab journalists surveyed believe encouraging political reform is their top priority (84.6%). “I think it is in every body's mind to bring political change,” said Nakhle El Hage, director of news and current affairs at Al-Arabiya. “By having the debate on the television channels about democracy and about political parties, it gives everybody a platform to say what they think and this is promotion for democracy. And by covering big democratic events like elections in Iraq, elections in Lebanon, elections in Palestine, elections in Iran, elections in the USA, in the UK, I think people are viewing these elections and are admiring them and they have no problems having elections in Egypt.”¹⁰²⁸ And while the pan-Arab media concentrate on the big picture, some local journalists aggressively focus on internal reform. “As a journalist, it is my job to elevate the people, to enlighten the people, to encourage the people,” explained *Al-Fajr’s* Hassan Amr.

Another motivation is to keep my country on the right track. Egypt is a very great and influential country. But now, it is going down because of the authoritarian regime. We lost wealth, we lost position, we lost our influence; we lost everything. So my motivation now is to get my country on the right track again. [If you] attack the apparatus ... of the authoritarian regime [you] take fear from the people [and give them the] courage to challenge the government. Sometimes I explain that the government [and] the prime

minister are deceiving them. I make scandals about the government and what they are saying. That is my job now.¹⁰²⁹

In Lebanon, according to the LBC's Tania Mehanna, that mission includes trying to stop the country's endemic violence. "If you do not have a mission to try to change [the world] around you in a positive way, you might as well work for any of the intelligence agencies," she said.¹⁰³⁰

Other journalistic tasks in this category can all be seen as playing a supporting role to this mission of change. They include encouraging civil engagement (67.2%), which is a precursor to political change, and serving as a voice for the poor (66.7%); transforming Arab society (54.5%); serving as an agent of change (51.9%); and acting as an adversary of the government (21.1%).

In Ramaprasad's categorizations, support for national/regional development and use news for the social good are natural sub-sets of his "Development" or "Loyalist" functions (depending on the country studied). I have chosen to include support for national/regional development (64.4%) and use news for the social good (68.5%) in the Change Agent category, since – in this context – they are both closely tied to the role of transforming Arab society. For example, Hussein Shobokshi, a columnist with *Asharq Al-Awsat* who also hosts a business program on Al-Arabiya, saw communicating "a message of reform, a message of development" as a top priority for Arab journalists.¹⁰³¹ While the author of this study has excluded "educate the public" from this category, a strong argument could be made that, in the context of the other journalistic priorities, "educate" could be interpreted in terms of educating the public to support political and social change, as in the comments of Samir Khader, a senior producer at Al-Jazeera, who told me it was his job to "educate the public to understand the world,"¹⁰³² and his colleague Ahmed Shugi, who believed it is his duty "to give something to the viewers, to educate them, to enlighten them."¹⁰³³ Shobokshi – who was banned from writing for several years and received death threats after publishing a column in the daily *Okaz* in which he imagined waking up in a country where the government was accountable to the people, citizens could vote and woman could drive – insisted that "create change and educate" are the inseparable missions of Arab journalism

because I believe there is social responsibility for media in the Arab world to play. People do not trust the educational system, nor do they rely on it any more. The social fabric of very traditional institutions, such as family, such as government, such as state, such as the municipalities, has all declined. But media is powerful and it is very effective. It is a platform to send an alternative message, a comparative message to a mass audience.¹⁰³⁴

Hassan Ibrahim of Al-Jazeera concurred: "We do not have the luxury of saying, 'Oh, my role is not to educate people.' The masses may not like it, but our role should be basically to educate them a little bit about the world around [them]. We are not doing that; no one is doing that."¹⁰³⁵

The Change Agent function far outweighed any other self-perceived set of roles and provides quantitative evidence that a majority of Arab journalists support Faisal Kasim's argument that, "Our media should be harnessed to liberate the Arab people from their internal gladiators."¹⁰³⁶ This perspective reflects the heart of Arab journalism culture, which Hanitzsch tells us, becomes manifest in "the way journalists think and act" to "legitimate their role in society." It provides both a foundation for the interpretation of news and a "professional worldview" through which the journalist approaches his/her job.

The Guardian: There is an encounter in the documentary *Control Room*, a film about the relationship between Al-Jazeera and the US military headquarters in the Gulf during the first weeks of the Iraq war, which epitomizes the sense of defensiveness permeating many Arab newsrooms as the Iraq war raged. In the scene, a US journalism professor counsels a young reporter from Abu Dhabi TV who has been assigned to the US Central Command media center. "Go interview the American spokesman," the professor, himself a former TV correspondent, suggests. "But don't be hostile; smile, when you talk to him." "Smile?" the reporter snaps back, physically bristling. "How can I smile when my people are dying?"¹⁰³⁷

Most US journalists adopted a defensive, us-against-them, wave-the-flag posture in the immediate aftermath of 9/11. It was, on some levels, a natural response to such a devastating attack in the heart of America's media capital. Since the autumn of 2001, Arab

journalists had been chronicling the ongoing deaths of tens of thousands of their fellow Arabs and Muslims in Iraq, Afghanistan and Palestine. And they were likewise angry and defensive. As Al-Jazeera's Khader told me, "It is very hard to be objective or to pick different perspectives of an event when you are part of the event."¹⁰³⁸ Over on rival Al-Arabiya, they struggled with the same challenge. "We try to empathize without sympathizing," explained Nakhle El Hage.¹⁰³⁹

That was not confined just to issues involving the US, it also extended to coverage of the Palestinian territories and the ongoing conflicts between Israel and Lebanon. Many Arab *journalists refused to buy into the idea that there needed to be some kind of a moral calculus that devoted equal time to Lebanese and Israeli suffering.* The 2006 Lebanon-Israel war was one example. "The balance of suffering was not there. One hundred and fifty Israelis dead, a third of them civilians; one thousand Lebanese dead, most civilians," says Al-Arabiya's Khatib. "We did stories on Israeli families suffering and Israelis in shelters but it's a totally different picture – the balance in terms of quantity [of coverage] would not be right because the suffering is not equal."¹⁰⁴⁰

Ahmed Mansour was Al-Jazeera's correspondent inside Fallujah during the US siege of that Iraqi town, which claimed hundreds of civilian lives. It was an experience that *forever shattered any illusion he may have had that journalists can always be neutral:*

A lot of times we can [make] a gap between being a human being and being a reporter, but sometimes you cannot. And when I was in Fallujah, every girl I saw, I remembered my daughter. When I try to [separate myself from what was happening], sometimes I cannot. I saw a child injured or die, I remember my son. They are Arab like you, Muslim like you. They are human people like you. Sometimes my colleagues [at] Al-Jazeera tell me, "Ahmed, you can talk more quiet and more slowly." How I can when this plane over my head destroys everything? Sometimes when they contacted me, I was in the middle of a massacre. How can I talk quietly? Sometimes I was on the air from in the hospital and between bodies and people injured. You are a man in the end. You are not an angel or from another planet. You are from this area. So you cannot do this gap between you as journalist and you as human.¹⁰⁴¹

Mansour believed that if American reporters had been inside Fallujah, instead of outside embedded with the US military, they, too, would have covered the story differently, just as “if I am in America and if any enemy to America comes to destroy this civilian area, I will cover it like Fallujah. No difference.” For Arab and US journalists, he said, it was all a matter of perspective. His Al-Jazeera colleague, Hassan Ibrahim, was not so sure. He said the fact that reporters carry with them the baggage of their culture meant that Arab viewers – like their counterparts in other cultures – still saw a mono-dimensional view of the region via their own media. “We try to be sympathetic to grief the Israeli mothers that have lost their children ... but do we really? Do we deal with the thing or do we, in a sense, justify it?” asked Ibrahim, a Sudanese-American who was one of the central figures profiled in the documentary *Control Room*. “I cannot call myself a human being if I do not have the same sympathy for the suffering of a human or a grieving mother whether her son was Yasser Arafat or Sharon. She is a mother. The pain is justified and the pain is terrible. The pain is there.”¹⁰⁴²

Long before the current polarized international climate, the founder of Lebanon’s *An Nahar* set out a mission statement that called for the newspaper to be non-confessional and “pro-Arab.”¹⁰⁴³ The survey results underline the degree to which that sentiment continues to shape the perspective of Arab journalists in the face of the Iraq conflict, the so-called “War on Terror,” and US support for Israel. This data includes:

- Strongly negative attitudes toward the US and US policy;
- Cynicism about US calls for democracy, a Palestinian state and even the motives behind humanitarian relief;
- Concerns about the threat posed by the US to both the Arab world and Arab journalism.

These coalesce into what the author has labeled the “Guardian” function (Figure 59). This category is the quantitative equivalent of the anecdotes related above. It involves a set of roles associated with the defense of Arab and/or Islamic causes and ideals which are unique to the region, including: “Support the Palestinian cause,” “Foster Arab culture,”¹⁰⁴⁴ “Encourage spiritual values,” “Defend Arab interests,” “Protect Islamic traditions,” and “Enhance pan-Arab unity.” The worldview of Arab journalists in the post-9/11 era has a

strong defensive aspect, in which they see themselves defending the Arab homeland at a time when an Arab country is being occupied by a foreign army and the Islamic world as a whole is, in the view of many Muslims, under siege. "Not only defending the Arab nation, but also defending the Arab causes," noted Samar Fatany, a leading Saudi woman journalist.¹⁰⁴⁵ Al-Jazeera's Mazen Ibrahim saw his role as more subtle. "I do not think that I have to defend or to change. All I have to do is let people see what is happening. So they will have to decide if they are going to defend or not defend, to change or not change," he explained. "I do not feel that we need an ideological TV or an ideological newspaper. It is better to be more or less objective and people to decide."¹⁰⁴⁶

Still, Rugh's "mobilization" model does continue to play a role in some Arab societies. One example: The 2007 Islamic World Media Conference that brought journalists from various Arab and non-Arab Muslim countries to Damascus under the patronage of Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, to discuss "the necessity of harmony among Islamic world's media in supporting the oppressed Palestinian people and their struggle to free their homeland."¹⁰⁴⁷ Meanwhile, in Palestine itself, some Palestinian journalists, like radio reporter Mohammed Al Amin Wail Hejazy, continued to believe that while it was important to "help the people," they could best do that by reporting events in Palestine to audiences abroad. "Only Palestinian can transmit the real truth about the issue to all the world," he told me. "Journalists in Palestine must seek assistance to all the people in Palestine."¹⁰⁴⁸

FIGURE 59: GUARDIAN ROLE

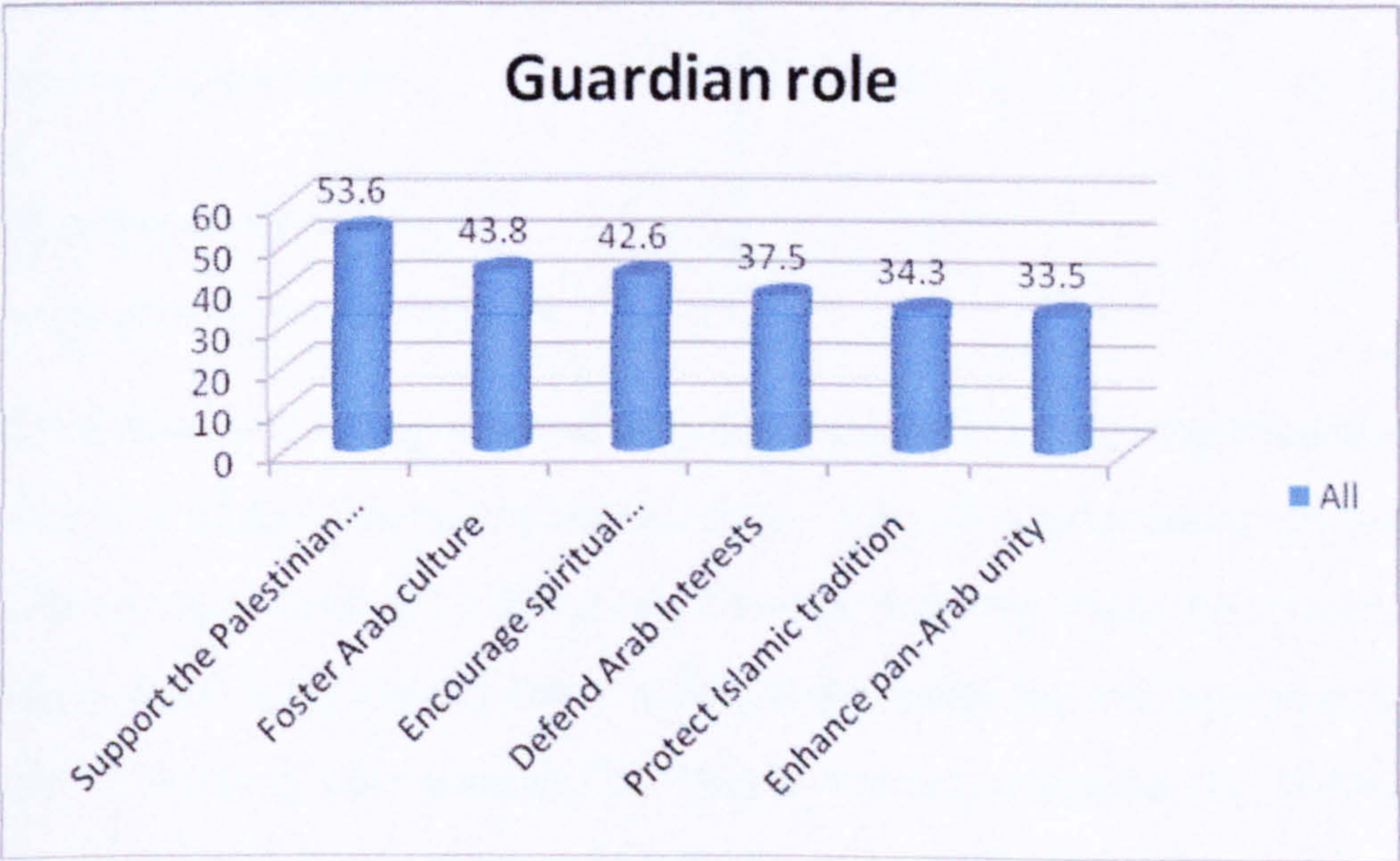


Figure 60 illustrates the perceived journalistic roles grouped under the two new proposed functional groupings, with the rest of the roles grouped within three of the relevant typologies proposed by other researchers.¹⁰⁴⁹ While, as noted above, supporting the Palestinian cause was not among the top priorities, more than half the journalists polled (53.6 percent) did say it was an important journalistic role, significant numbers put fostering Arab culture (43.8 percent) and encouraging spiritual values (42.6 percent) high on the list, and more than a third included as top priority the need to defend Arab interests (37.5 percent), protect Islamic tradition (34.3 percent), or enhance pan-Arab unity (33.5 percent). *“When you are being attacked from everything, and your culture, your principles, your ideas, your thoughts, you have to defend; you have to be on the defensive,”* explained Samar Fatamy.¹⁰⁵⁰

That this category ranks second after Change Agent is significant. It demonstrates the degree to which the external threat continues to shape ‘national’ identity among Arab journalists. It is not the overriding influence, but it is notable – and it is a common threat that is evident in responses of journalist across the region. For some Arab journalists, that responsibility to defend extends to “balancing” the professional role of a journalist and the obligations of a citizen. Here we see the limited influence of the normative occupational ideology – what Deuze calls the “cultural cement”¹⁰⁵¹ – that theoretically links journalists around the world, and the greater influence of personal attitudes, organizational and extra-media influences as outlined in the hierarchy-of-influences model.

FIGURE 60: FUNCTIONS

Function/Role	"Most Important"*
Change Agent	
Encourage political reform	84.6%
Use news for social good	68.6%
Support national/regional development	68.5%
Encourage civic engagement	67.2%
Serve as voice of the poor	66.7%
Transform Arab society	55.4%
Agents of change	51.9%
Adversary of government	21.1%
Interpreter	
Educate the public	74.6%
Analyze	60.3%
Disseminator	
Entertain	26.5%
Simply Report	61.9%
Loyalist	
Support government policies	7.2%
Support employer	6.7%
Guardian	
Support Palestinian cause	54.4%
Foster Arab culture	43.9%
Encourage spiritual values	41.2%
Defend Arab interests	38.4%
Protect Islamic traditions	33.2%
Enhance pan-Arab unity	33.7%
Watchdog	
Investigate government claims	50.6%

*Participants were allowed to select multiple roles

“You have a very big responsibility [as a journalist],” observed Ibrahim Hamidi, a Syrian who is *Al-Hayat’s* Damascus bureau chief, “but this responsibility has two faces. I do not run after scoops because I know a lot of scoops that may harm the country. I might be not objective, but it is the country that you live in that really matters more than your job. The priority is the safety of your country.”¹⁰⁵² Magdy Samaan, a reporter for *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, an independent daily in Egypt, said he tried to separate his various identities. “First I am

Egyptian. Second I am a journalist. But it is not a mix. Sometimes I am a Copt[ic Christian]. Sometimes I go to cover Copts' conflicts. My Copts people, they were angry [about] some news in which I told the truth of it. I try not to mix between this."¹⁰⁵³ For Othman Mahmoud Al Sini, editor-in-chief of the Saudi daily *Al-Watan*, the functions of guardian and change agent went hand-in-hand. "If I want to defend Saudi faith or Islamic faith, I have to say the truth. But I cannot say, 'No everything is fine, everything is alright,' because if I say that, I am not right," he explained. "What we are doing is not to say what is in Saudi interests or Arab interests. We are trying to get the truth from our society, because there is no *one* truth."¹⁰⁵⁴ But, said Ahmed Mansour, by definition Arab journalists present that "truth" from the Arab perspective. "It is my job to report for the Arab people. I am not a correspondent for West, for East, for anywhere, for any people. I am a correspondent for the *Arab* people."¹⁰⁵⁵

While he agreed it is natural, Hassan Ibrahim, for one, had mixed feelings about the degree to which Arab journalists were wearing the word "Arab" on their sleeve. "There is a competition to be bold and daring. It is fashionable. And, of course, it is very tickling for any journalist to be described as a person with a mission. I do not know how good that is for a journalist, because it means that you are proud of having a slant from the news. And objectivity is being pushed the back further, in a sense that a lot of journalists do not mind to appear more patriotic to the cause."¹⁰⁵⁶ The head of the BBC's Arabic service, Hosam El Sokkari, worried that once causes are taken up, objectivity is abandoned. "Lots of channels do not hide that they are there to address what they believe are their audiences' causes. And that, in itself, is a position." Al-Jazeera's Maher Abdallah Ahmed agreed. "We're a means to exchange information, not banners for causes. If journalists are advocates of causes, they hurt themselves and the profession," he told a conference in 2004.¹⁰⁵⁷ M'Hamed Krichen shared that concern, particularly when it comes to Al-Jazeera, where he is a news anchor. "We should be very careful about this because we are not political party and we are not a leadership for this Arab nation," said Krichen, an Algerian who has worked for the BBC, Radio Monte Carlo, Netherlands Radio and several Arab broadcasters. "At the end of the day, we are a television station ... We are speaking a different language [than government-controlled broadcasters], but we should keep our feet on the earth and not become propagandists."¹⁰⁵⁸

Hassan Ibrahim agreed that the need to choose sides even extends to religion. "We have a religious program on Al-Jazeera [hosted by] one Sheikh [named] Qaradawi. I have a lot of respect for Qaradawi. But Islam is not just Qaradawi. Islam is a religion opting for a lot of interpretations. So are we promoting one brand of Sunni Islam? I say we still have a long way to go."¹⁰⁵⁹

Following Change Agent and Guardian, the next-highest level of support went to a set of more neutral roles that naturally fall within what Weaver et al labeled the Interpreter function. For Arab journalists, this includes educating the public (76.6%) (although, as noted above, this could also be seen as a Change Agent role if it is being done with the goal of spurring the public into supporting change), and analyzing developments (61.9%). British columnist Robert Fisk once described his newspaper, the *Independent*, as a "viewpaper," that was keen to print the insights of its journalists as part of its stories. It is just such an approach, common in the British and southern European media, that sums up the Interpreter function.¹⁰⁶⁰ A fourth category, also in line with Weaver et al, is the straightforward dissemination of news and information, which also includes just two roles for Arab journalists: simply reporting facts (26.5%), and entertaining (23.3%). About half the journalists saw it as their duty to investigate government claims, which falls within Weaver's Watchdog function. The final grouping is the Loyalist, first identified by Rugh and borrowed by Ramaprasad, which, in the Arab case, includes two roles that hark back to the classic mouthpiece function of Arab media. These can be found in countries in which media remains highly controlled, such as Sudan, where, according to Mahmoud Tanim of Al-Arabiya, for local journalists, "a news conference is like dictation; you write everything down and then you go to the newspaper and publish it as is." He deplored this as a "military mentality," adding that "if the newsmakers can impose themselves on the newspapers, you can say that the courage of the mass media is very bad."¹⁰⁶¹

As they struggled to define their new role, Arab journalists came face-to-face with the question of loyalty. "To whom should loyalty be?" asked Egypt TV's Abd el-Latif el-Menawy. "Should the loyalty be to the receiver of information, whether it is a reader or a viewer? Or should the loyalty be to the society? Or should the loyalty be to the one who is paying the salary at the end of the month?"¹⁰⁶² The majority of Arab journalists appeared to

be rejecting the old answers. The survey found that Loyalist functions now elicited only marginal adherence: with the roles of “support government policies” and “support employer” garnering just 7.2 percent and 6.7 percent respectively. Even in the most repressed societies, journalists were chafing at the traditional restrictions. In Tunisia, where the government maintained an iron grip over the media, reporters and editors “are embarrassed” because a country that once had a free press now required reporters “to bring news from the official agency and they can’t change any word in this press releases about repugnant activities,” said Rashid Khashana, editor of a free opposition weekly. “The role of journalist is to criticize people who are doing bad things, who are doing against the national interest. And the first national interest for us now is to build democracy, to build pluralism and to protect the human rights in our country because it is the point that always considered the fundamental thing to build a new society.”¹⁰⁶³

There was no doubt that many Arab journalists saw their news organizations as a weapon to be wielded in the face of the perceived US threat. “Media,” said Palestinian journalist Amin Abu Wardeh, “is one of the purest forms of non-violent resistance.”¹⁰⁶⁴ It is also, noted Rami Khouri of the Beirut *Daily Star* and the American University of Beirut, “the only arena where Arabs have been able to fight the Anglo-Americans to a draw.”¹⁰⁶⁵

Yet, the data shows that Arab journalists do not daily strap on their armor in preparation for another clash with the modern-day Crusaders. While they acknowledged that they have a journalistic responsibility to the greater Arab nation and Islamic *umma*, their priority was, as Al-Jazeera’s Kasim put it, to “get liberated locally before we get liberated from foreign colonialists.”¹⁰⁶⁶ In part, this stems from a belief among journalists, as among many other Arab intellectuals, that while there is little practical they can do in the face of 130,000 US troops in Iraq or the might of Israel, they *can* have a real impact on how events unfold on a domestic political and social level. “We do not possess an army to go and change people,” said Osama Mirghani, deputy editor-in-chief of the pan-Arab daily *Asharq Al-Awsat*. “But you can be very effective by giving them information. By simply transmitting the pictures you are helping to bring about change.”¹⁰⁶⁷

As noted in Chapter VI, pan-Arab satellite television helped to drive Syrian forces out of Lebanon, it created the groundswell of Arab support for Hezbollah that ultimately

helped prompt an about-face by the Saudis during the 2006 Lebanon war, and its ongoing coverage of human rights violations in Egypt was feeding opposition to the Mubarak regime. In many ways, such coverage was far more dangerous for journalists than taking on the US or Israel. "You can defend" against outside interference, explained *Arab News* Editor-in-Chief Khaled al-Maenna, "but the same time you should pin point deficiencies in the Arab world first. If you are not brave enough to do that then you are in the wrong business."¹⁰⁶⁸

Summary: The need for regional political reform was at the top of the agenda for Arab journalists, who – in the turbulent first decade of the new century – identified themselves politically with the forces of political change. The perceived external threat posed by US policy in the Arab world was an inescapable presence in the newsrooms of the region. As Samir Khader of Al-Jazeera put it: "The Arab journalist, in general, has the same problem as the average Arab, this feeling of being under siege. And they have a mission to defend the nation, to defend the religion."¹⁰⁶⁹ But the data indicates Arab journalists were not preoccupied with antipathy toward the US, as some Western policymakers posited. On balance, they saw the greatest threat to the region – and to Arab journalism – coming from the actions of Arab governments, and each of the top issues they identified as critical for the future of the Arab world linked back to the authoritarian nature of the ruling status quo.

Adel Bari Atwan, editor-in-chief of *Al-Quds Al-Arabi* – a vocal critic of the governments in Saudi Arabia and Egypt, as well as US Middle East policy – was emphatic when asked about his role as a journalist. "I have a mission to modernize our society, to promote democracy, to promote human rights, to promote independent judicial system, to change our society, to adopt the values which can actually put us in a different category, not the rotten category where we are now," said the self-described "black sheep of Arab journalism," who was based in London because he has been banned in most Arab countries. "Actually, I enjoy the fruit of democracy in the Western world. I try to pass this experience to my people. I try to enlighten them about why the Western societies are more advanced than us. So I am trying all the time to emphasize this, but in a very professional way. Not just, you know, by insulting the others and imperialism."¹⁰⁷⁰

R1 CONCLUSION: The primary mission of Arab journalism is that of fostering political and social change in the Arab world, with a secondary role of defending the Arab/Muslim people and values against outside interference.

R1 IMPLICATIONS: This perspective goes to the core of both nationalist and journalism theory. Understanding how Arab journalists see their own mission is critical because, as Shoemaker and Reese hypothesize, "[j]ournalists' role conceptions affect content." Whether journalists see their role as interpreting, disseminating or serving as an adversary, they wrote, will determine "how they define their jobs, the kinds of things they believe should be covered, and the ways in which they cover them."¹⁰⁷¹ In giving priority to political and social reform in defining their mission, we see evidence of Reese's contention that "media symbolic content is connected with larger social interests."¹⁰⁷²

The Change Agent function clearly telegraphs the fact that Arab journalists, as a whole, generally agree on a certain set of standards or principles by which they believe their society should be governed. These include political participation, human rights, access to education and related political and social rights, which, they indicate, Arabs across the region are largely denied.

For Arab journalism, I contend that the Change Agent function is both fundamental and iconic in terms of how journalists view themselves and their role in society; fundamental because it rests in the historic roots of Arab journalism; iconic because it is a self-view to which even those who cannot implement it aspire.

Gellner tells us that the "feeling of anger aroused by the violation" of a principle, and the "feeling of satisfaction aroused by" fulfillment of that principle defines the very essence of "nationalist sentiment."¹⁰⁷³ Thus the shared perspective Arab among journalists that existing rulers are failing to offer the political and social reforms needed by the people of the region, and the pride in the self-view that they are, as Fatany said, "shaping public debate," together become so important in relating this to an emerging regional sense of shared challenges and possibilities.

Likewise, the elements of the Guardian role bind Arab journalists together in the face of what clearly fits Hasting's description of the "long struggle against an external threat" that is such a critical element in the development of national identity.¹⁰⁷⁴ This is so important because the resulting "language of self-defense" is, Anderson notes, a critical element in the mobilization of popular nationalism,¹⁰⁷⁵ and the transnational media of the twenty-first century is the epitome of the "modern mass communications" that Smith says "amplify and broadcast" messages that bind peoples to a shared "ethno-history and heritage" when under threat.¹⁰⁷⁶

RESEARCH QUESTION 2:

HOW DO THE STATED ATTITUDES OF ARAB JOURNALISTS COMPARE TO THOSE OF THEIR COLLEAGUES FROM OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD ON SPECIFIC QUESTIONS OF JOURNALISTIC NORMS?

1) OVERVIEW

In the years since the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, the Aspen Institute, a US-based think tank, has periodically brought together a small group of elite American and Arab journalists to discuss their respective roles in the context of broader US-Arab/Muslim relations. Participants include top editors, White House and State Department correspondents, and columnists from news organizations such as *The Washington Post*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today* and National Public Radio, along with their counterparts from Arab news organizations such as *Al-Jazeera*, *Al-Arabiya* and *Al-Ahram*. Deep into the second day of one of these gatherings, discussion turned, once again, to the question of whether American and Arab journalists were doing their jobs. "Do we even agree on what that job is?" this writer asked. The organizer and moderator, himself not a journalist, quickly responded, "Of course," and moved the discussion in another direction. But the reality was that not one of the Arabs in the room believed that they and their American counterparts had the same view of the mission of journalism.

"I do not think we agree," Jamil Mroue, publisher and editor-in-chief of the *The Daily Star* in Beirut, told me later. "And I do not think it is as simple as saying, 'you are a journalist in New York and I am a journalist in Lebanon or in the UAE, and that means the same thing.' It does *not* mean the same thing. And certainly when we go further and talk about your institutional role as a newspaper or my role in a newspaper, or the role of the media industry in your society and mine, certainly we are comparing apples and oranges and not apples and apples. They are in the same orchard, in the sense that they are in the same profession, but they are not the same tree."¹⁰⁷⁷ Hussein Shobokshi, who also participated in the Aspen session, was equally emphatic in his rejection of the idea that US and Arab journalists had the same view of their mission. "No, I do not buy that. I think it is part of the confusion," he told me. "In the West, media seeks to maintain what it has

achieved, while in the developing country it seeks to achieve what it inspired.”¹⁰⁷⁸ “Two places and two cultures, and everything is different,” said Al-Jazeera’s Ahmed Mansour, summing up the vast divide.¹⁰⁷⁹

A pair of anecdotes illustrates the fundamentally different ways in which US and Arab journalists approach their profession. On the second anniversary of the US invasion of Iraq, Ahmed Sheikh, Al-Jazeera’s editor-in-chief, was in Baghdad interviewing Iraqis for a documentary. He soon found that all his high-minded ideas about “objectivity,” “balance” and “truth” evaporated in the face of the grim reality on the ground. “Because I was so horrified by the scene that I saw in the city – lawlessness, chaos, disorder, and the Americans were not capable of doing anything,” he found himself asking leading questions that were unconsciously aimed at producing the answers he wanted. “Why did I fall into this trap unknowingly?” he asked rhetorically:

We are human beings, we belong to this nation, the Arab nation, because this is our language, we speak in Arabic ... If you are part of a society and you live in a society, this is going to affect objectivity. We belong to this Arab nation and we are there to cover from our own perspective. Sometimes it may prove to be very difficult to be impartial. You find yourself carried away with your sentiments, but you have got to work hard to keep that sort of essence.¹⁰⁸⁰

One year later, during a panel discussion at the Graduate school of journalism at the University of California – Berkeley to mark the third anniversary of the invasion, *Washington Post* correspondent Jackie Spinner was asked how she had felt about the war before she went to Baghdad and how she felt about it after months spent covering the conflict. “I have a very platonic relationship to the war. I believe very fervently as a journalist that it’s not appropriate for me to express my opinion about the war,” she told the gathering. “I don’t talk about it with my friends; I don’t talk about it with my family. My family members don’t know who I voted for or if I even voted. I’m an old school journalist. I don’t believe it’s appropriate at all. I’m an observer: I went to war, I saw what I saw, I wrote about what I saw, and that’s the extent of it.”¹⁰⁸¹

The anecdotes highlight the divergence in attitudes toward their roles among some American journalists and their Arab counterparts and offers a vivid example of Hanitzsch's observation that while journalists the world over share "a common theoretical denominator of journalism culture," that journalism culture manifests very differently depending on where in the "real" world of journalism practice the reporter or editor is plying his/her craft.¹⁰⁸² Few US reporters would go to the extreme of hiding their true feelings even from family members, but most do ascribe to at least an ideal of objectivity. And most US news organizations have rules against their journalists engaging in political activism. That often extends even to those who are not actually journalists. In the spring of 2007, for example, CBS News fired one of its military consultants, retired Army Maj. Gen. John Batiste, after he appeared in an anti-Bush television commercial. According to CBS News Vice President, Standards and Special Projects, Linda Mason, Batiste violated the network's regulations. "We ask that people not be involved in advocacy," she said.¹⁰⁸³ For many Arab journalists, rules like those at CBS or public posturing such as that of Spinner are all part of a smoke screen that artificially masks the real views of the reporter. "I cannot be completely objective," says Al-Arabiya reporter Haitham Hussein. "Truth is the most important thing, but it depends on the media that you are working with. If you are working with BBC, Al-Arabiya, or Al-Jazeera, the truth is not the same. Maybe you can share the same information, but not the same truth."¹⁰⁸⁴

For Arab journalists, war – particularly a war in the Arab heartland – is not something with which any Arab can have "a very platonic relationship." Beyond the issue of whether journalists like Spinner are being honest with themselves, much less their readers, the contrast raises the question: If, as some scholars argue, journalism is "a set of cultural practices,"¹⁰⁸⁵ can they be expected to translate across borders? "The way to select news and the way to select [quotes], the way to select the point of view, this still belongs to our cultural environment and background. We cannot separate ourselves from this background. Like the American or French or British journalists cannot do the same," argued Al-Jazeera's M'Hamed Krichen, who says journalists must still strive "to be professional, even if we are not 100% natural."¹⁰⁸⁶

2) JOURNALISTIC MORES

The heart of the difference between Arab journalists and journalists elsewhere in the world can be found in the set of Arab journalistic approaches that involve the *Change Agent* and *Guardian* functions discussed earlier, which group roles associated with political/social change and the defense of Arab/Muslim ideals. The roles among US journalists that are most closely related to these functions are those of “Set the political agenda,” chosen as “extremely important” by just 3 percent of those polled by Weaver et al, and “Motivate people to get involved,” endorsed by 33 percent of the American reporters and editors.¹⁰⁸⁷ These two roles were aggregated, along with three others, into what Weaver et al labeled the “Popular Mobilizer” function, which, by the time of their 2002 survey, had “established a foothold with a larger minority”¹⁰⁸⁸ (10.4 percent) of US journalists, in part, they speculated, due to increased interest in “public” or “civic journalism” (see Chapter IV).

Yet the three other roles in the grouping all garnered relatively low support: “Let people express views” (39 percent, down from 48 percent in 1992); “Develop cultural interests” (17 percent); and “Point to possible solutions” (24 percent). The “Change Agent” roles identified among Arab journalists form a unique sub-set of the “Popular Mobilizer” category. These are role to which American journalists do not generally subscribe. While “Change Agent” roles – which certainly seek to mobilize the populous – easily fall within the “Popular Mobilizer” function, the opposite is not the case. The public or civic journalism associated with the “Mobilizer” roles in the US seeks to mobilize the public to engage in the political process and prompt discussion of positive solutions, but American proponents of civic journalism are not overtly seeking to change the political and social landscape. Indeed, the roles at the core of the Arab “Change Agent” function are anathema to most American civic journalists, much less the mainstream of the profession.

The other attitudinal clusters into which Weaver et al aggregated their data included: “Interpretive” (62.6 percent), “Adversarial” (18.6 percent) and “Disseminator” (15.6 percent). For the 2002 US results, the adversarial function had dropped in importance in comparison to previous surveys.¹⁰⁸⁹ The interpretive function included “Investigating official claims,” which was the individual role that garnered the highest rating from the US reporters and editors (71 percent). As Weaver et al wryly observed in reporting their survey findings, “the

continued popularity of the government watchdog role seems ironic in view of the relatively strong press support the Bush administration enjoyed between the September 11 tragedy and the war in Iraq.”¹⁰⁹⁰ Only four of the individual journalistic roles mentioned by US reporters made it into the Arab top ten roles (Figure 61). Significantly, two of those four fit within the “Change Agent” function, and while Arabs rated them highly, they were well down on the US journalists’ priority list. The “Guardian” function, meanwhile, was completely missing from the US and European responses, as well as those of journalists in the developing world.

FIGURE 61: COMPARATIVE ROLES

Arab Top Ten Roles*	Arab	US	Hong Kong	Mexico	Chile
Encourage political reform	86%	--	28%	28%	--
Educate the public	76%	--		--	--
Encourage civil engagement (US: Motivate people to get involved)	70%	33%	--	--	--
Use news for social good	69%	--	--	--	--
Voice for the poor	66%	--	--	35%	13%
Support development	66%	--	--	--	--
Analyze complex issues	62%	51%	55%	--	--
Transform society	57%		--	--	--
Investigate government claims	52%	71%	58%	58%	31%
Change agent/agenda setting	51%	3%	--	83%	64%

*Without “Support Palestinian cause,” since it is unique to the Arab context

3) ARAB AND NON-WESTERN JOURNALISTS

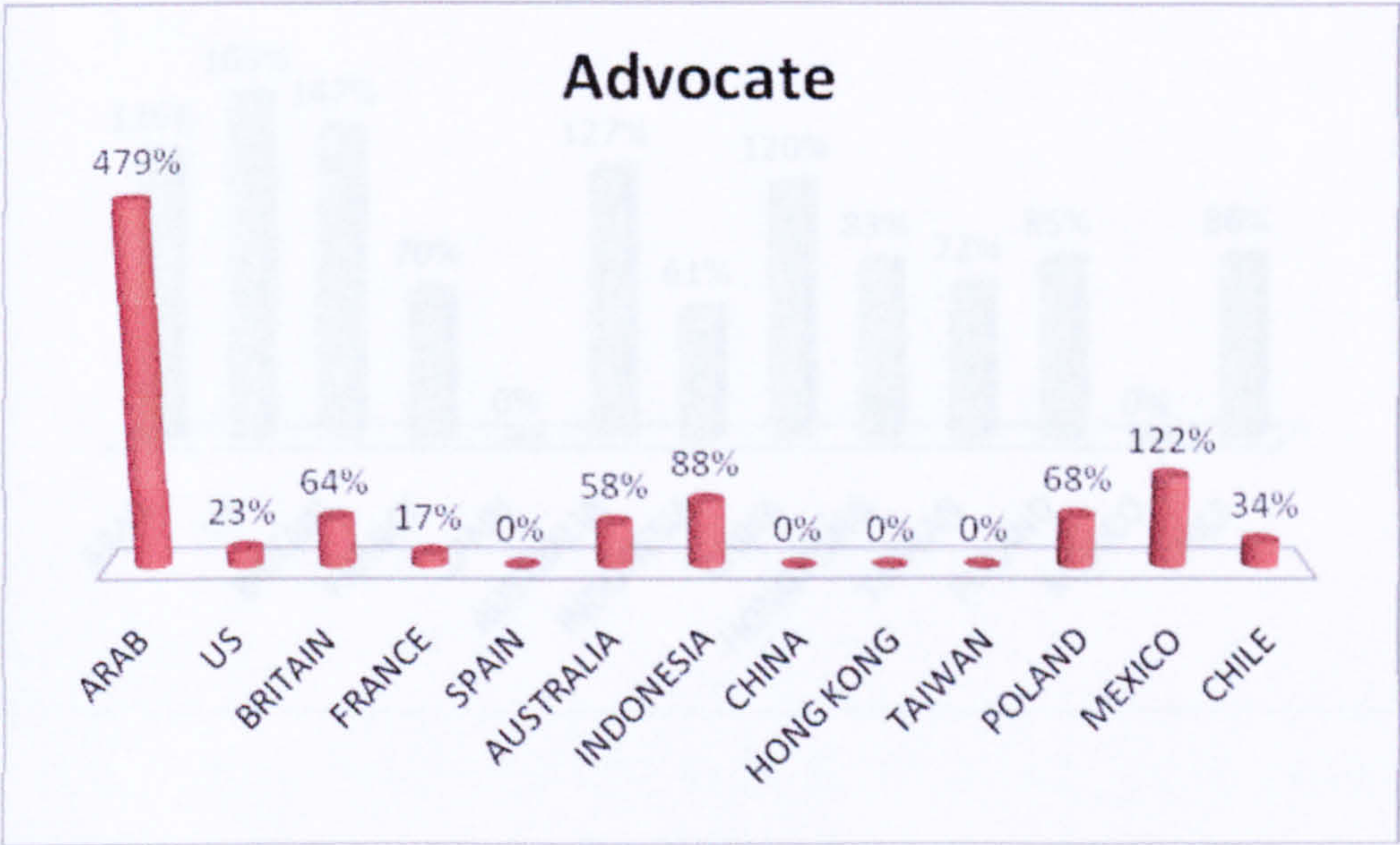
Just as the US categories did not include some roles identified by Arab journalists, neither did the Arab data seamlessly fit the Ramaprasad functions. Nor was there a significant overlap in perceived roles with journalists who were studied in an assortment of other surveys in Europe, Latin America, Africa or Asia, as evident in Figure 62. The “Change Agent” function outlined above forms a sub-set of a broader set of roles that together reflect an activist or advocacy agenda. However, as Figure 63 illustrates, even when the overtly agenda-setting roles favored by Arab journalists are grouped into a broader category of activist or “Advocacy” roles, which include those that do not overtly seek to change political and social structures, Arab journalists are still far more heavily committed to using their craft as a means to an end than other colleagues elsewhere in the world. “My real job is to cover stuff, but my idealistic job is to make a difference,” explained Roula Mouawad of *An Nahar*, “to really motivate people in a good cause.”¹⁰⁹¹

Far down on the Arab journalists’ priority list was the Disseminator function (Figure XII-11), which involves the straightforward recounting of events. It is a dominant category for Western journalists but less popular among developing world journalists.. The job of a journalist is “to inform, to be [the audiences’] eyes and ears,” according to Saudi reporter Samar Fatany. “As a journalist I should be objective as much as I can. Now sometimes you cannot be objective for different reasons. So we have to give them whatever we have if we can at the certain limits. There are limits for everything as you know.”¹⁰⁹² The Arabs were in synch with their colleagues around the world on the importance of interpreting news for the viewer (Figure 65) but they strongly rejected the classic development journalism perception of the journalist as a defender of the government and his/her own employer, as grouped in the “Loyalist” function (Figure 66). Nor did they give as high a rating to the “Watchdog” function as US and some other journalists (Figure 68).

The “Guardian” roles (Figure 67) so popular among Arab journalists were absent from the roles journalists in the US and developing world saw for themselves. Likewise, the classic roles of development journalism prevalent in Southeast Asia – in which “freedom” was often defined as “the freedom to assist the state in carrying out programs for social and

economic development” rather than freedom from government control¹⁰⁹³ – were largely absent from the Arab journalistic worldview (Figure 69).

FIGURE 63: ADVOCATE



Numbers reflect the aggregate percentage of journalists taking part in the respective surveys who selected “most important” or its equivalent. Some chose more than one role.

FIGURE 64: DISSEMINATOR

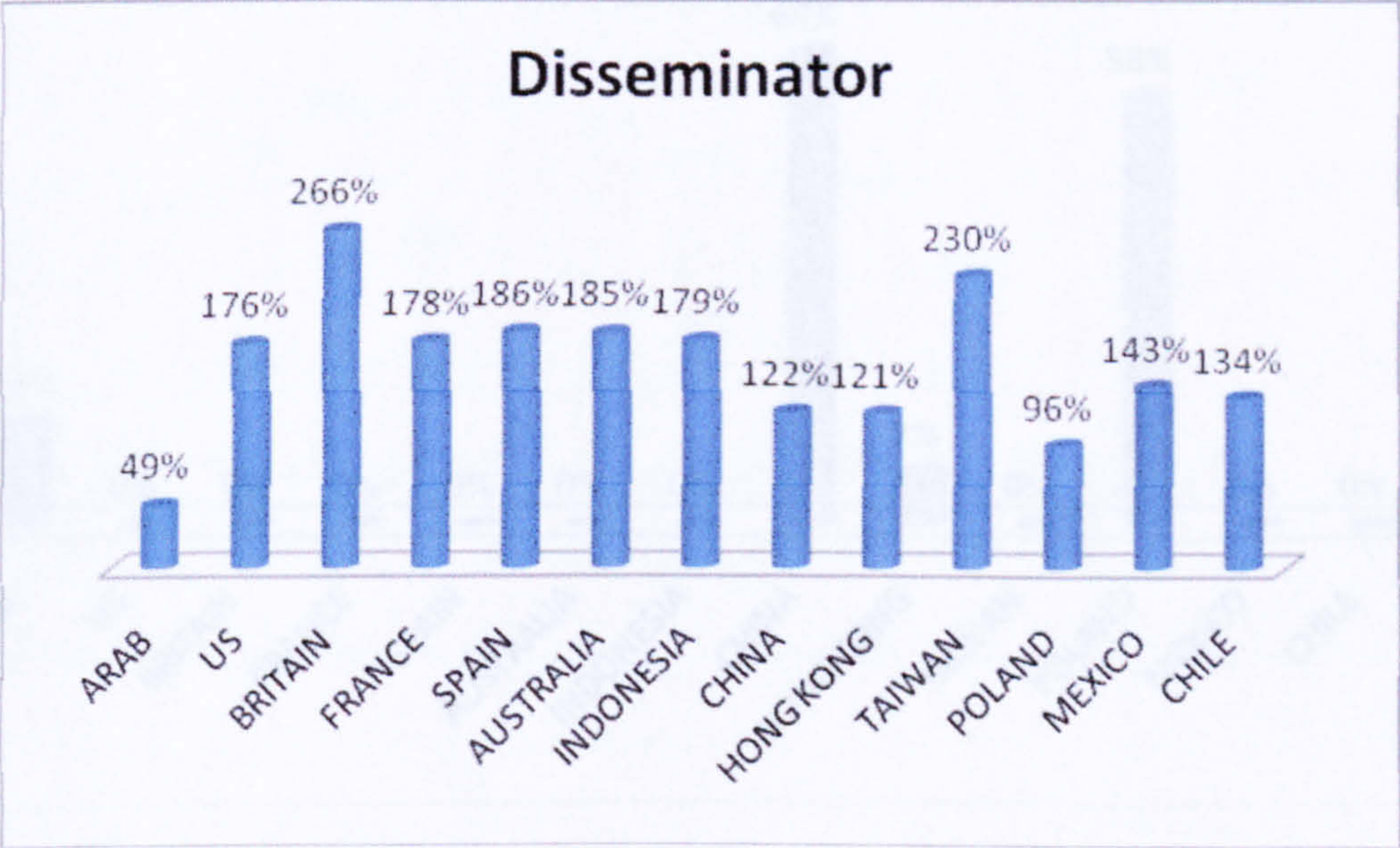


FIGURE 65: INTERPRETER

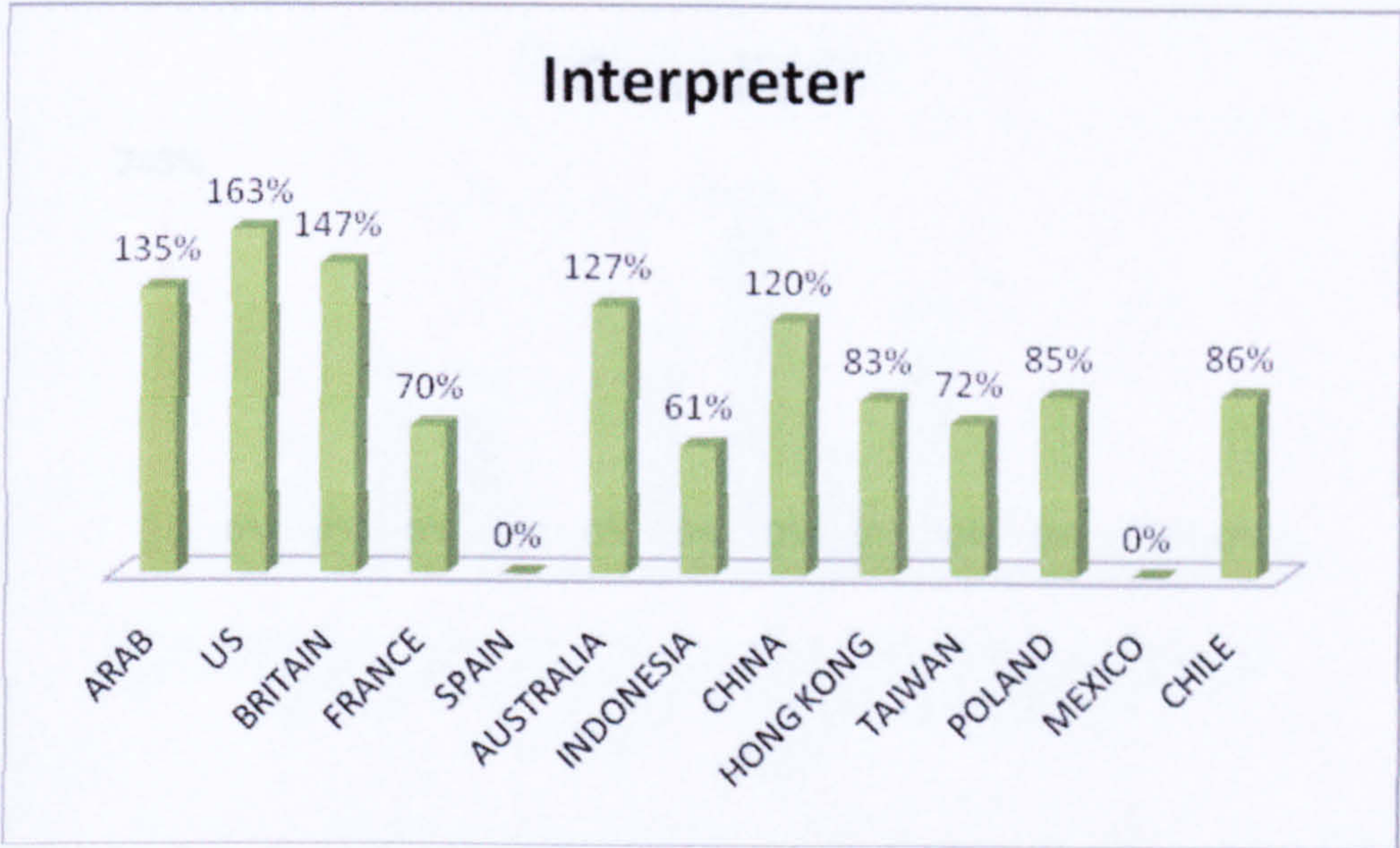


FIGURE 66: LOYALIST

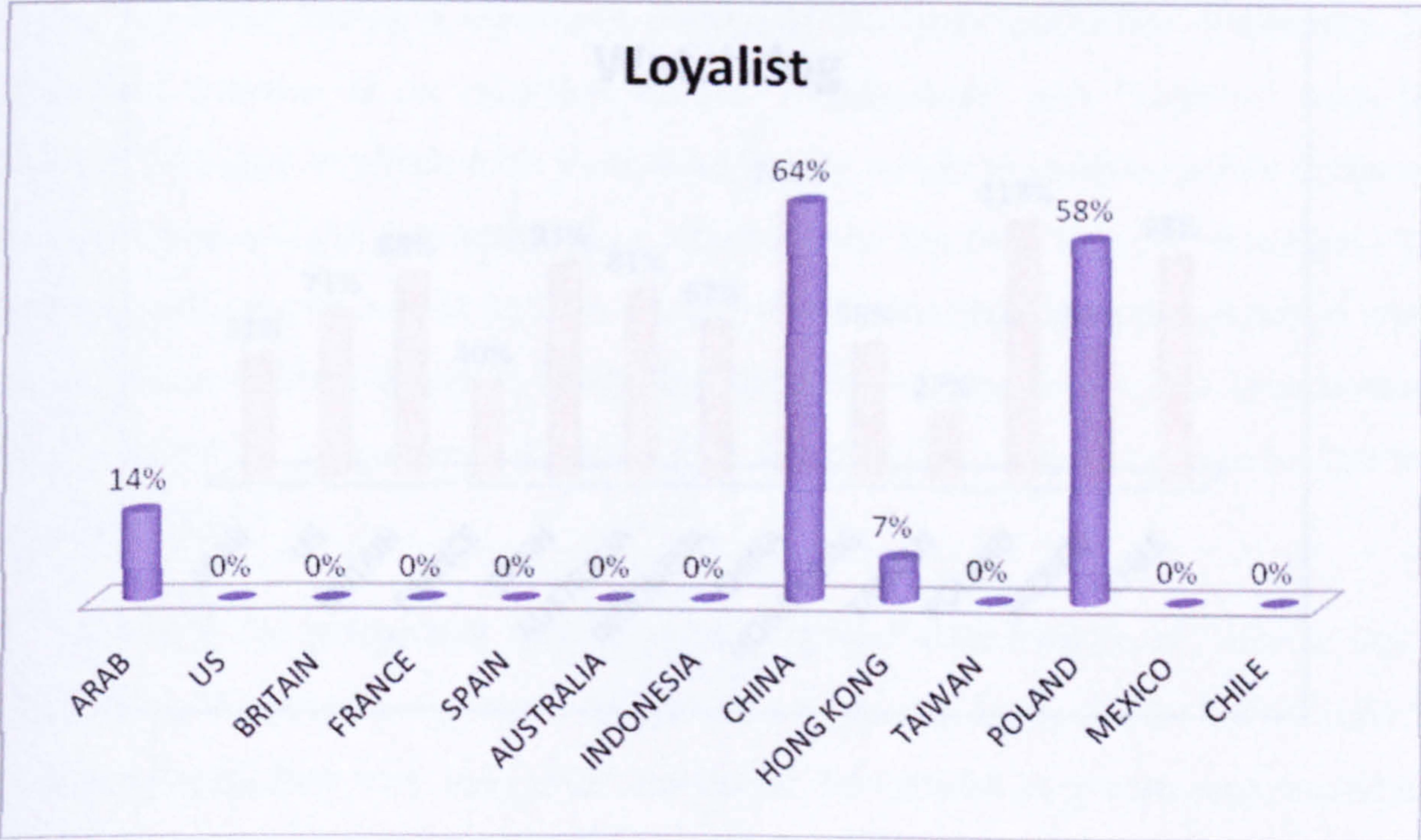


FIGURE 67: GUARDIAN

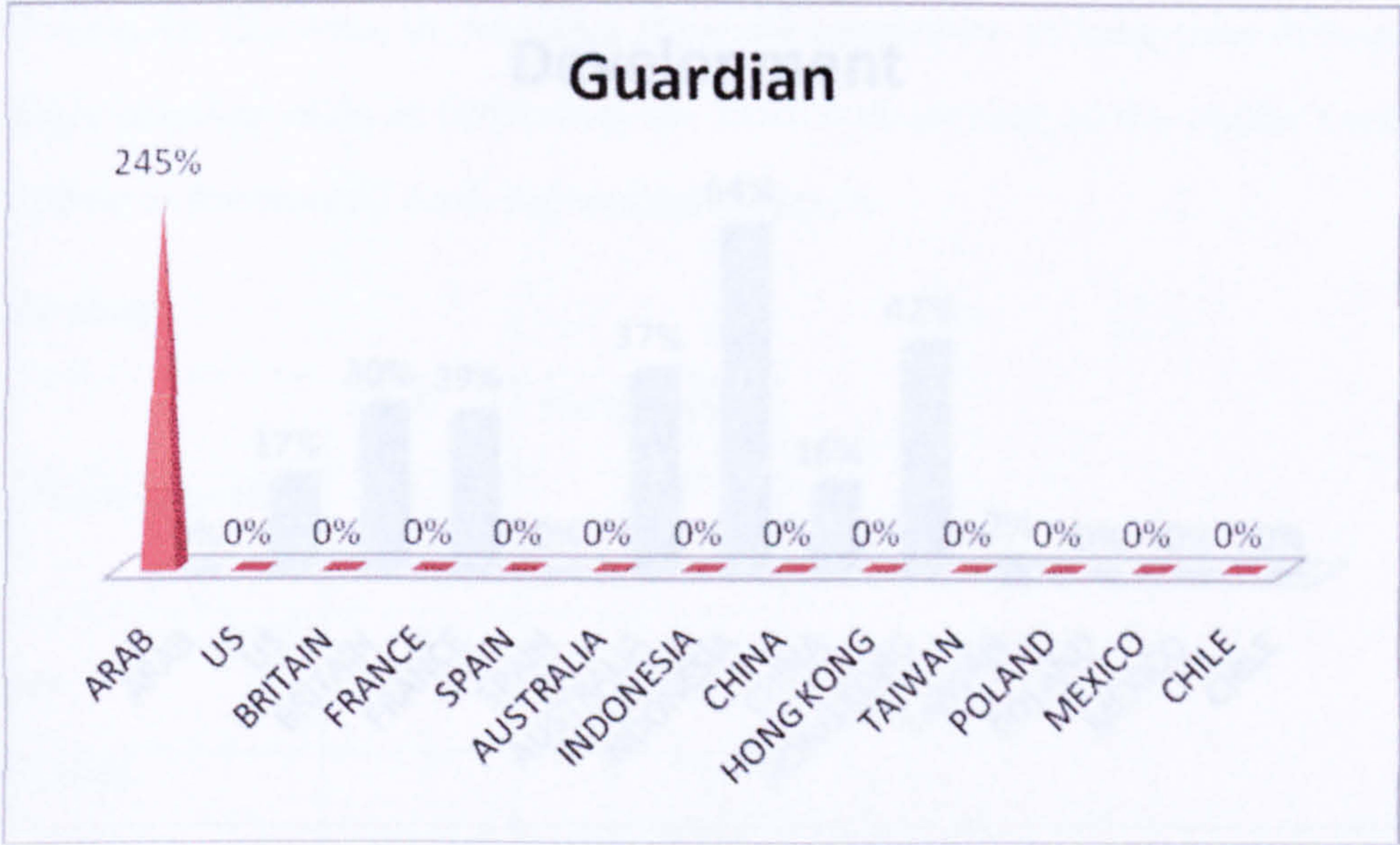


FIGURE 68: WATCHDOG

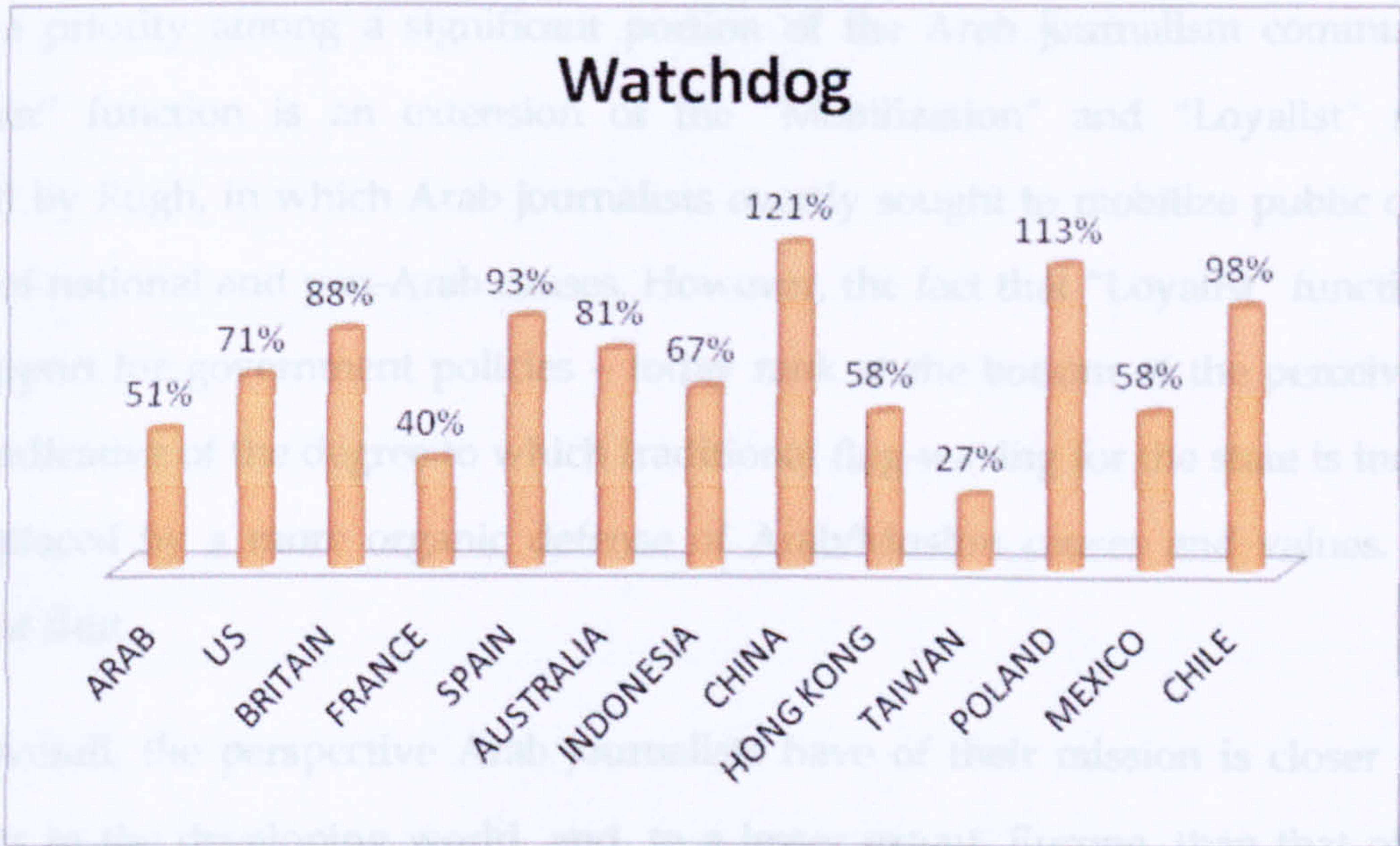
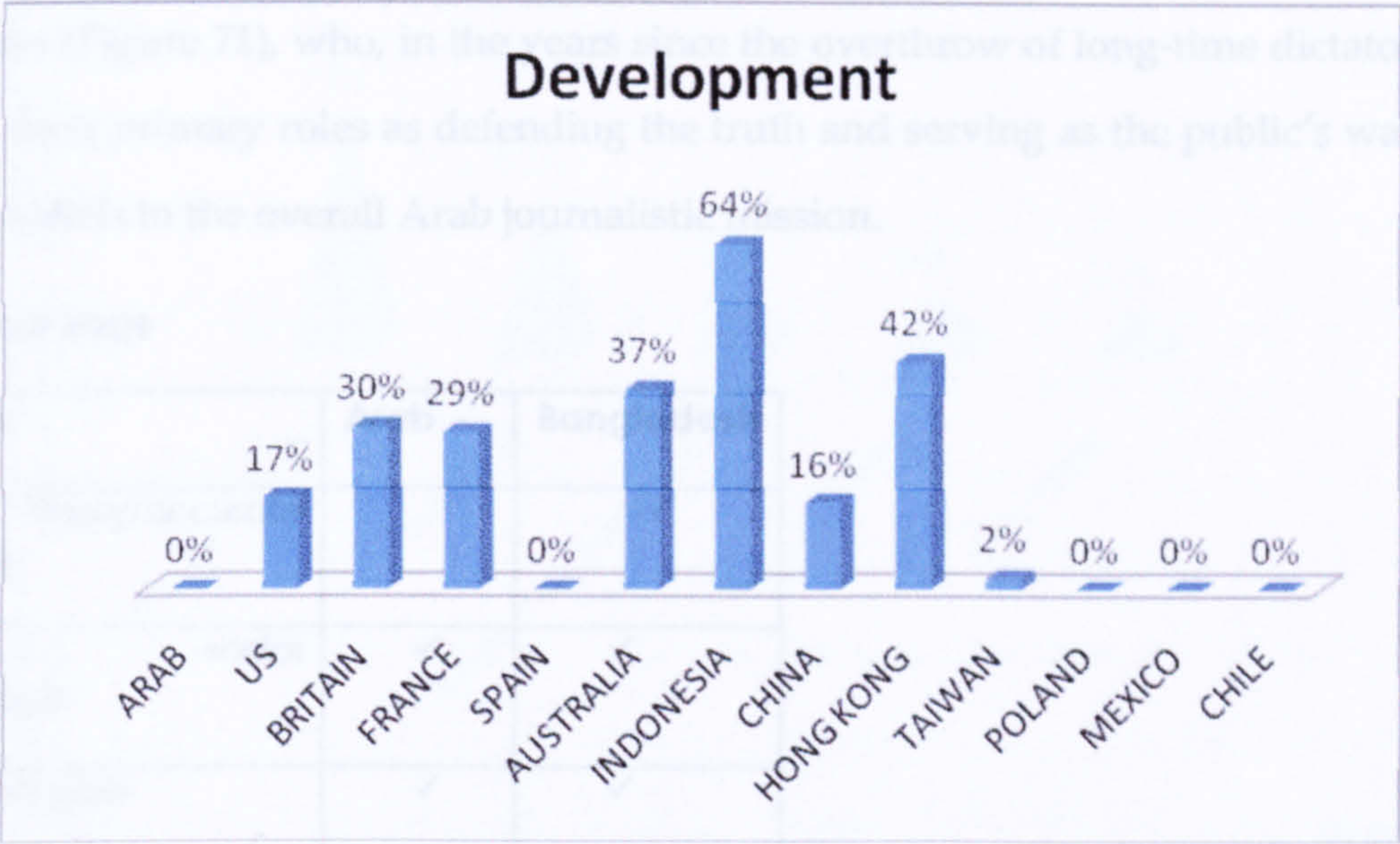


FIGURE 69: DEVELOPMENT



As noted above, two of the functional groupings are largely unique to Arab journalists. The “Change Agent” function highlights the fact that political change has become a priority among a significant portion of the Arab journalism community. The “Guardian” function is an extension of the “Mobilization” and “Loyalist” roles first identified by Rugh, in which Arab journalists overtly sought to mobilize public opinion in support of national and pan-Arab causes. However, the fact that “Loyalist” functions – like overt support for government policies – today rank at the bottom of the perceived media roles is indicative of the degree to which traditional flag-waving for the state is increasingly being replaced by a more organic defense of Arab/Muslim causes and values. This is a significant shift.

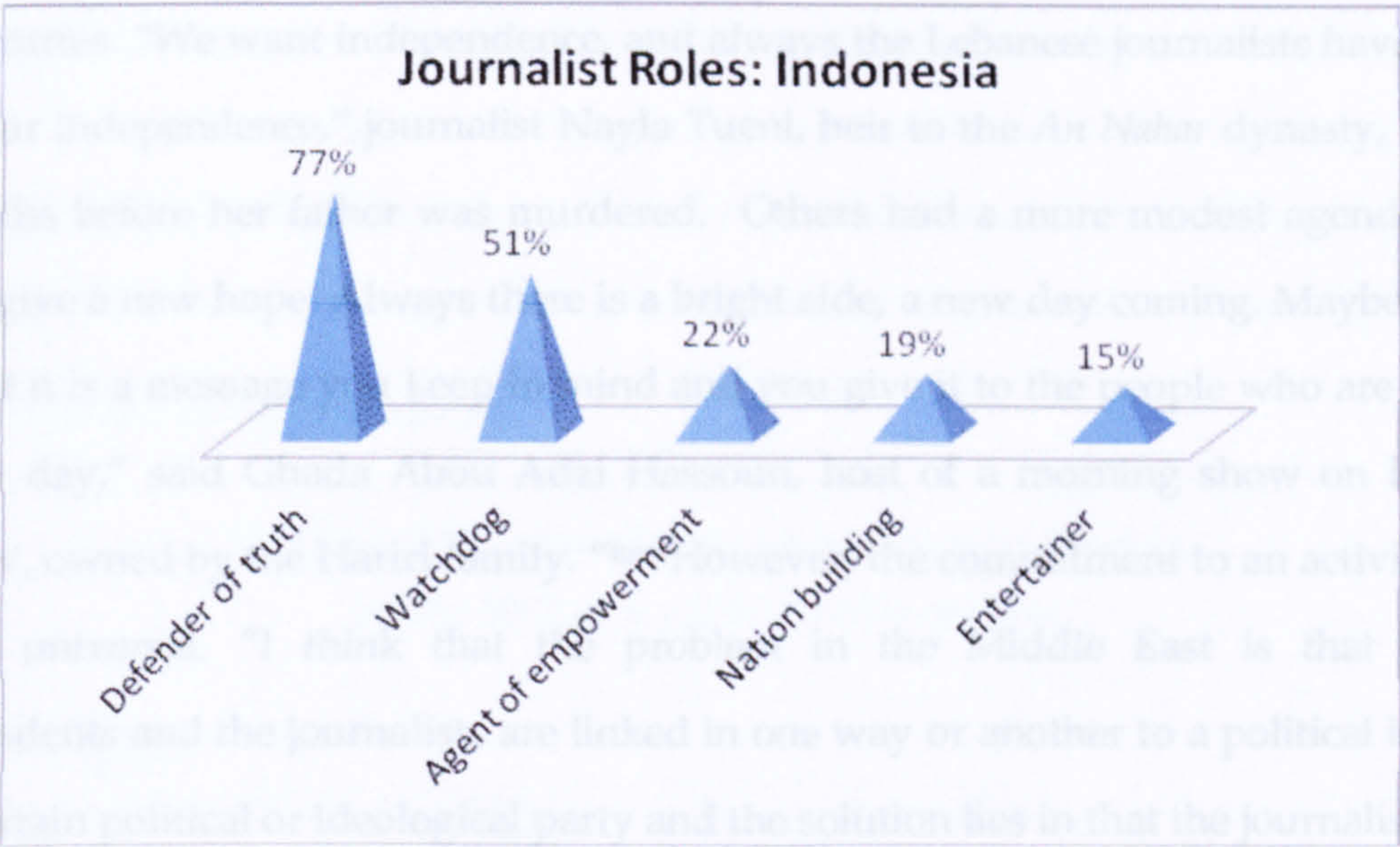
Overall, the perspective Arab journalists have of their mission is closer to that of journalists in the developing world, and, to a lesser extent, Europe, than that of their US colleagues. While they have long since abandoned the Loyalist or government mouthpiece role, Arab journalists do believe they are more than a simply conduit for information. As Ziak Talhouk, a Lebanese journalists working for the Italian news agency ANSA, put it: “Everyone has his own political beliefs. It is [a journalist’s] right to use his political opinion to get feedback, but not to try to impose this point or view.”¹⁰⁹⁴

That view is shared, for example, by Bangladeshi journalists, who endorse eight of the top ten roles Arab journalists see for themselves (Figure 70), and by Indonesian reporters and editors (Figure 71), who, in the years since the overthrow of long-time dictator Suharto, have see their primary roles as defending the truth and serving as the public’s watchdog,¹⁰⁹⁵ strong parallels to the overall Arab journalistic mission.

FIGURE 70: TOP ROLES

Top Roles	Arab	Bangladesh
Provide timely/accurate information		✓
Advance social development	✓	✓
Voice of the poor	✓	✓
Civic engagement	✓	✓
Analyze government policies	✓	✓
Provide positive image of the country		✓
Inform citizens about govt actions	✓	✓
Report on national development	✓	✓
Critically examine govt policies	✓	✓
Investigate govt claims	✓	✓

FIGURE 71: INDONESIAN ROLES



Source: Romano¹⁰⁹⁶

4) ACTIVIST JOURNALISM

As noted earlier, some leading Arab media figures wear two hats, that of a journalist and that of a politician. Many others blur the line between journalist and political activist. US-based Egyptian columnist Mona Eltahawy proudly took part in anti-regime *Kifaya* demonstrations in Cairo’s Tahrir Square when she returned to her native land to cover the 2006 elections. “I am no longer just a journalist, I have become the heart of the conflict,” Al-Arabiya presenter Giselle Khouri, a Lebanese national, told me in late 2005. Her husband, Samir Kassir, an outspoken anti-Syrian columnist for Lebanon’s largest daily, *An Nahar*, had been assassinated less than six months before. The Israeli assault on Lebanon left many other Arab journalists sharing her pain. Rami Khouri, the Harvard-educated editor-at-large for Beirut’s *Daily Star*, was out of the country when the conflict broke out. In a column entitled “Back to Beirut: Ready to Defy Israel,” he explained his desire to return home: “I want to return mainly because steadfastness in the face of the Israeli assault is the sincerest - perhaps the only - form of resistance available to those of us who do not know how to use a gun, and prefer not to do so in any case, for there is no military solution to this conflict,” he told his readers.¹⁰⁹⁷

Many Arab journalists point with pride to the role the media played in forcing Syria to withdraw from Lebanon in the so-called “Cedar Revolution” and the media’s impact on

the broader *Kifaya* (Enough) movement for political change that it inspired in several other Arab countries. "We want independence, and always the Lebanese journalists have a role to play in our independence," journalist Nayla Tucni, heir to the *An Nahar* dynasty, told me a few months before her father was murdered. Others had a more modest agenda. "Every day you give a new hope. Always there is a bright side, a new day coming. Maybe it is very small, but it is a message you keep in mind and you give it to the people who are watching TV every day," said Ghada Abou Adal Hassoun, host of a morning show on Lebanon's Future TV, owned by the Hariri family.¹⁰⁹⁸ However, the commitment to an activist agenda was not universal. "I think that the problem in the Middle East is that even the correspondents and the journalists are linked in one way or another to a political institution or to a certain political or ideological party and the solution lies in that the journalist is not to join any of these sides," said Hussein Jamal of Kuwait TV.¹⁰⁹⁹ LBC presenter Dolly Ghanem bemoaned the degree to which Lebanese journalists engaged in politics. "Sometimes I see that journalists are working politics more than journalism," she told me. "This is what I do not like to see. We are here not to work politics; we are here to do our job."

The majority of those surveyed disagreed with Ghanem. Seventy-four percent said they think it is permissible for a journalist to engage in political activities, and 81 percent said they had no objection to a journalist taking part in political demonstrations. While many US journalists either refuse to register as a member of a political party or keep their party allegiance private, the figure of the journalist-politician is not unusual in parts of the developing world. When asked "how should a journalist conceive his task?" 30 percent of Mexican journalists surveyed chose, "politicians with other means."¹¹⁰⁰ Similarly, a survey of Polish journalists found that "the bulk of them ... did not perceive a danger to impartiality from a journalist's engagement in political and economic activity or the assumption of public functions."¹¹⁰¹ Therefore, in this issue of political engagement, Arab journalists again more closely resembled their colleagues in the developing world than those in the US.

5) RELIGION

Arab journalists are significantly less overtly religious than their respective publics. In this, they are similar to their US counterparts.¹¹⁰² However, Arab journalists still identify with religion far more closely than American journalists. Where 88 percent of Arab

journalists surveyed identified themselves as Muslims, and one-third of those described themselves as “religious” vs. “secular” or undeclared, about one-third of US journalists said they did not practice any religion.¹¹⁰³ Both groups were asked whether it is necessary or is not necessary to believe in God in order to have good moral values. Almost 40 percent of Arab journalists said it was necessary, versus just 5 percent of US journalists (Figure 72).¹¹⁰⁴

FIGURE 72: MORAL VALUES (US COMPARISON)



Arab n=400

US data source: The State of the News Media 2007¹¹⁰⁵

6) SUMMARY

The core normative aspirations of journalism – objectivity, fairness, informing the public – are near-universal. They are espoused by journalists of every persuasion on every continent. But the view of the mission of journalism is deeply affected by culture, religion, local/regional politics and the state of development of any given society. The data indicates that while Arab journalists share with their US counterparts a desire to interpret and analyze information for their audiences, they are closer to developing world journalists in their desire to influence the direction of society. However, on the most important self-described roles, Arab journalists are unique in their desire to drive political and social change and to safeguard their region and culture from external threats.

R2 CONCLUSION: Arab journalists are clones of no one. They share values and professional aspirations with journalists in all parts of the world, but identify closely with none of them. The situation in the Arab world today is

different from that anywhere else. As a result, Arab journalists are carving out their own professional path and refining their own sense of journalistic mission.

R2 IMPLICATIONS: The fact that Arab journalists have sharply different views from both US journalists and those in other parts of the world toward the real world application of Western journalistic norms provides strong support for a key hypothesis of this dissertation: That "while Arab journalists share with colleagues around the world a basic set of normative professional values, such norms quickly fall away in the face of empirical challenges to their core identity of religion, nationality and ethnicity" (page 13). It also supports the hierarchy-of-influences model, and specifically the way in which Hanitzsch's and Reese's theories of about the role of culture fit within it.

This evidence is seen in both the quantitative and qualitative data. The high level of support for activist roles and low support for disseminator functions among Arab journalists is in sharp contrast to the responses of their colleagues in other regions. The comment that the approach to news in Arab journalism cannot be separated from "our cultural environment and background"¹¹⁰⁶ underlines the relevance of the theories of Reese and Hanitzsch. But the data also shows that Arab journalists remain conflicted about their role vis a vis Western mores as they navigate the shoals of societal and other extra-media pressures, the realities of the organizations for which they work, and their own personal perceptions, biases and sense of identity, a situation that closely tracks the hierarchy-of-influences model and reflects Hanitzsch's contention that "diverse professional ideologies struggle over the dominant interpretation of journalism's social function."¹¹⁰⁷

In Shobokshi's comment that Arab and US journalists operate in "the same orchard" but "not the same tree" is a pithy mirror of Hanitzsch's belief that there exists "a universe of diverse and coexisting worlds of journalism."¹¹⁰⁸ Such results would seem to strike another blow to those theoreticians who argue for the existence of a "universal" journalism ethic, and they provide further support for applicability of the Shoemaker and Reese model.

RESEARCH QUESTION 3:

HOW DO THE ATTITUDES OF ARAB JOURNALISTS COMPARE
TO THOSE OF THE ARAB PUBLIC-AT-LARGE?

1) BASIC DEMOGRAPHICS

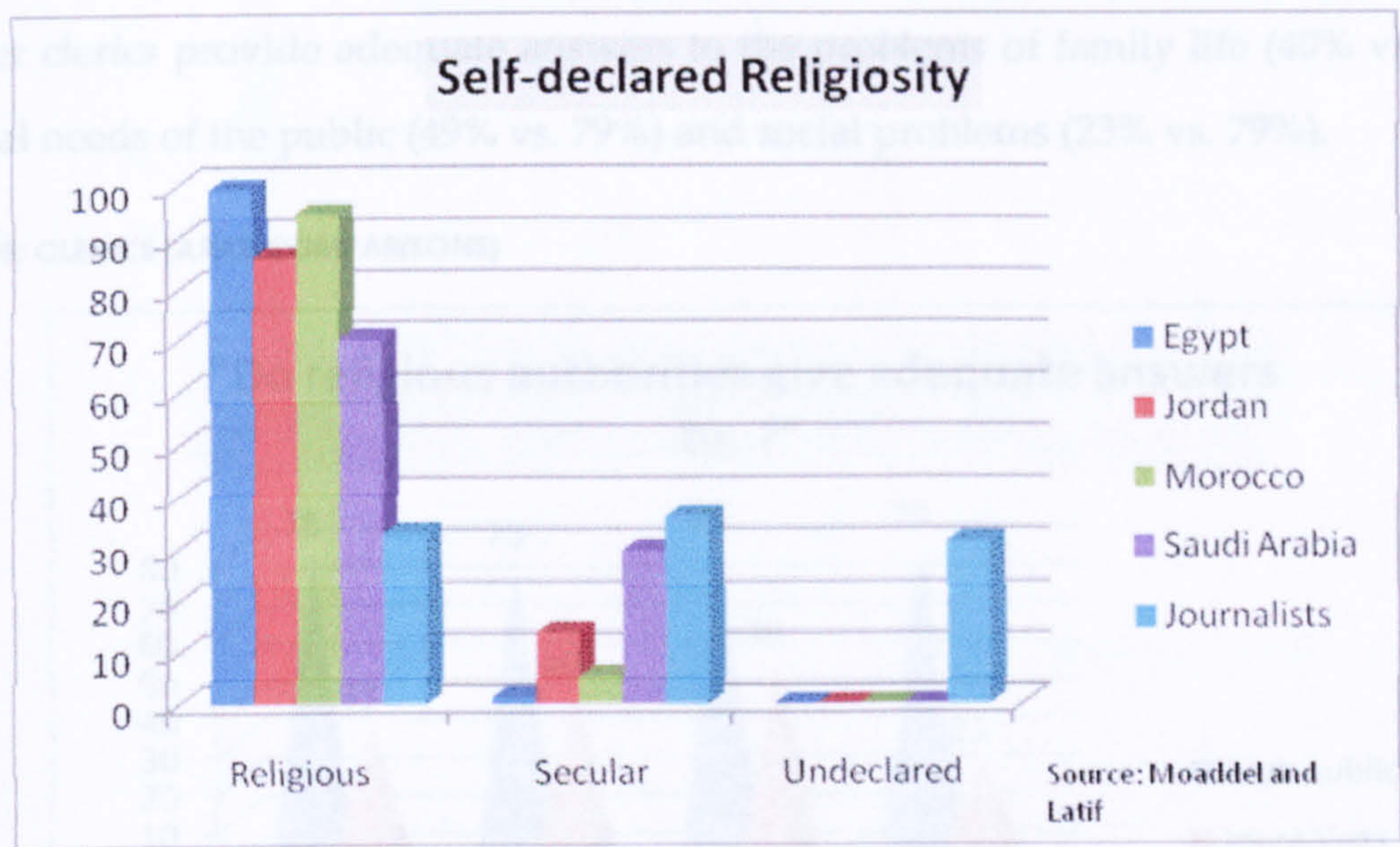
In a region with high poverty and low literacy levels,¹¹⁰⁹ journalists are a relative elite. Less than 14 percent of the Arab public has a university degree versus 38 percent of the journalists surveyed. Likewise, their median income of \$1,000-\$1,500 *per month* – paltry though it may be by Western standards – is stratospheric when compared to the average in the region, where per capita income is estimated at \$2,100-\$2,300 *per year*.¹¹¹⁰

2) RELIGIOUS/SECULAR ORIENTATION

Roughly a third of the journalists surveyed identified themselves as “religious” versus “secular” Muslims, while another third did not declare their religiosity (Figure 5). When the public in Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt and Morocco were asked a similar question (“Independently of whether you go to religious services, which of these describe you? Religious person; Not a religious person; A convinced atheist”), 88 percent chose “religious” and 12 percent chose “not religious” (Figure 73).¹¹¹¹ While the majority of Arab journalists chose “journalist” when asked to declare their primary self-identity, the next largest group chose “Muslim,” which was the primary identity of the public-at-large. However, where the public chose national identity as the next-most popular choice, “Arab” was the next choice of the journalists, with less than ten per cent choosing national identity (Figure 74).

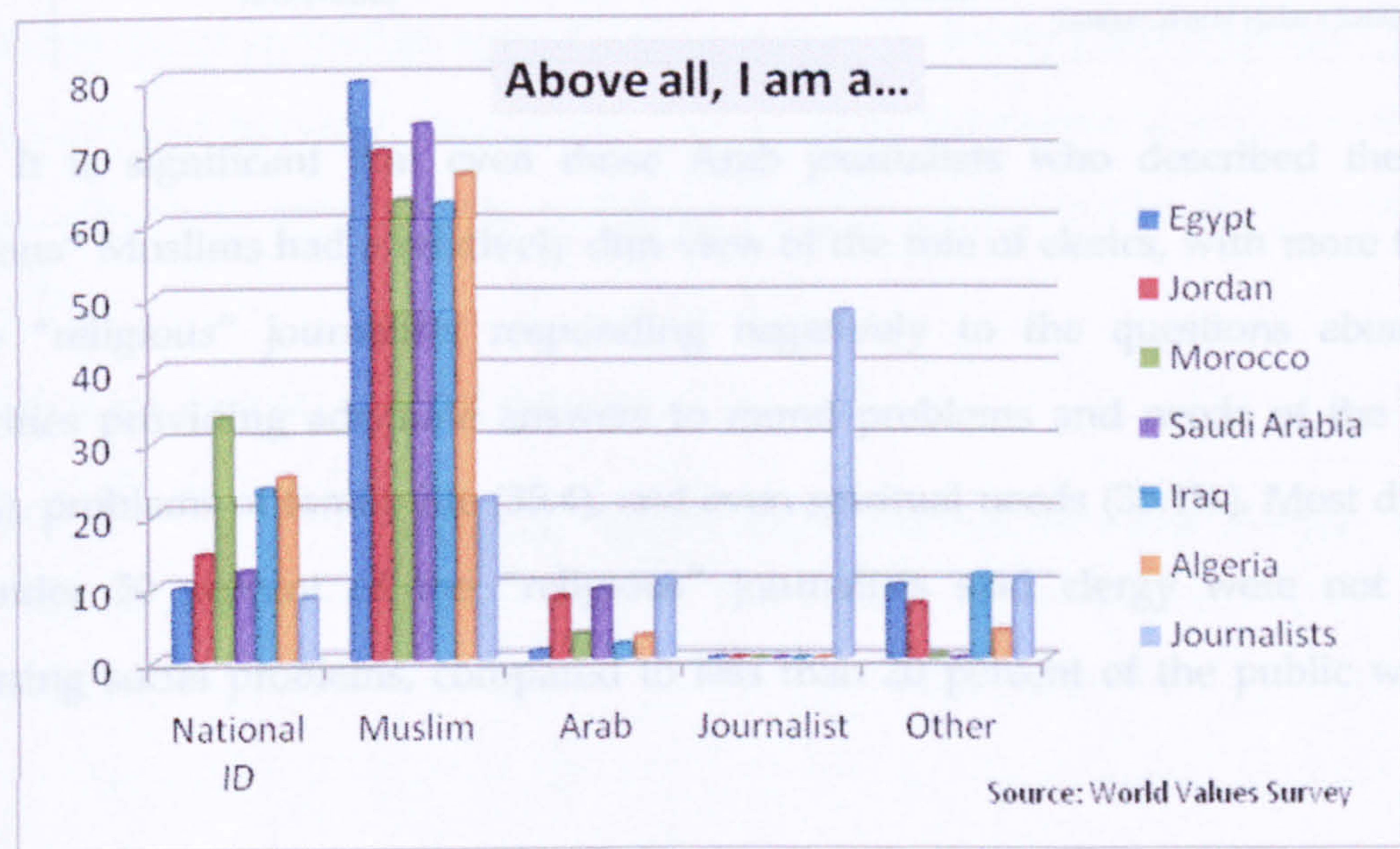
When combined with the questions of political identity (Figure 56) and geographic identity (Figure 8), these five sets of responses – political identity, geographic identity, religiosity, primary self-identity, and national identity – together define the Arab journalist in the first decade of the twenty-first century. These measures serve as a litmus test for journalistic self-identity; through them we find that Arab journalists overall are far less overtly religious than the public-at-large, identify more closely with the Arab “nation” than the nation-state, and rank professional identity much higher than any other identification.

FIGURE 73: RELIGIOSITY (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source: Moaddel and Latif¹¹¹²

FIGURE 74: IDENTITY (ARAB COMPARISONS)

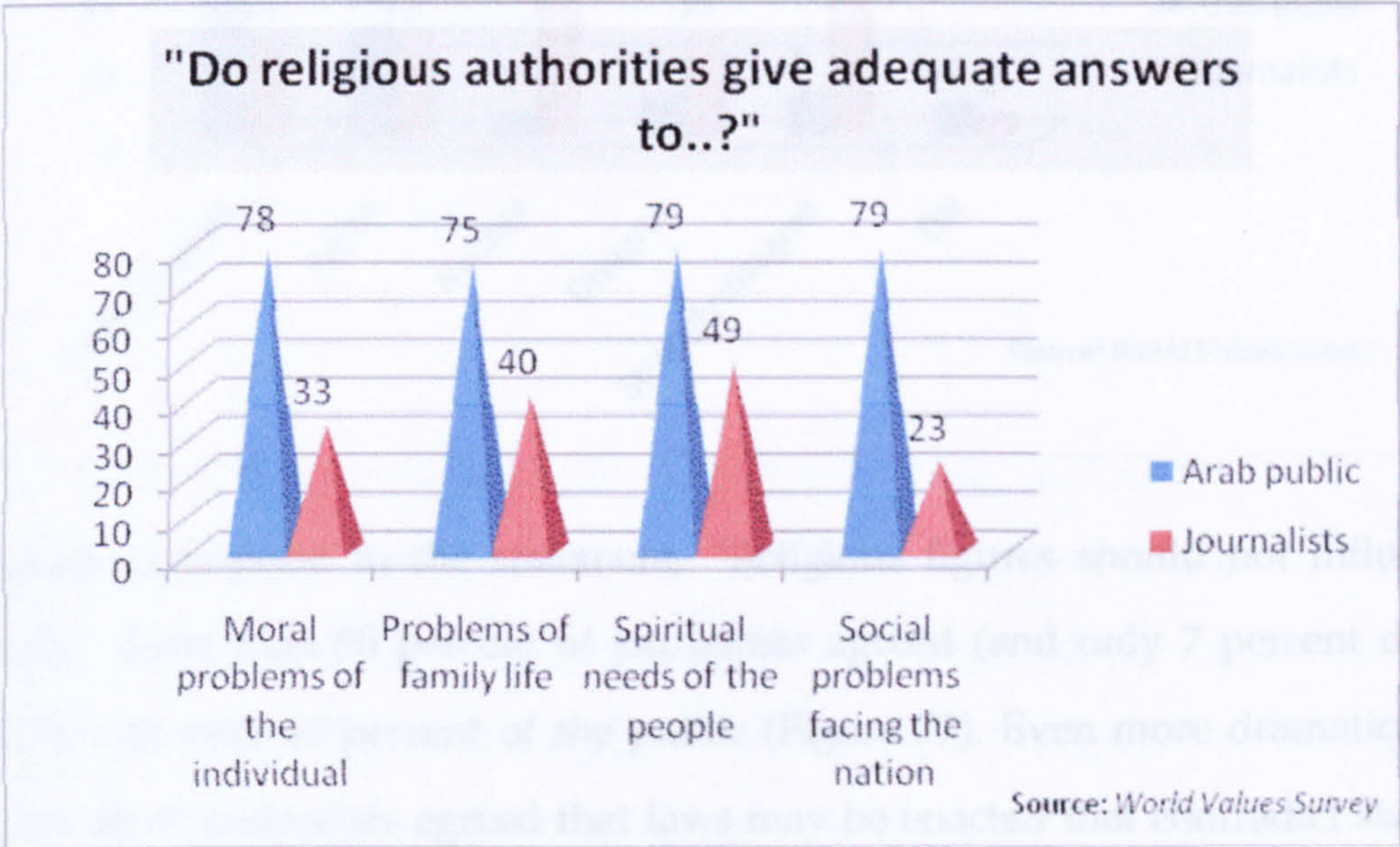


Source Arab attitude data: Moaddel *The Saudi Public Speaks* 2006

Arab journalists were asked a series of questions about the role of religious authorities in the region, which had earlier been asked of the public as part of the World Values Survey. The results show that Arab journalists have far less confidence in religious authorities than does the public-at-large (Figure 75). Less than half as many journalists as members of the Arab public responded in the affirmative when asked if religious authorities

give adequate answers to the moral problems of the individual (33% vs. 78%), while substantially fewer journalists than members of the public responded positively when asked whether clerics provide adequate answers to the problems of family life (40% vs. 75%), the spiritual needs of the public (49% vs. 79%) and social problems (23% vs. 79%).

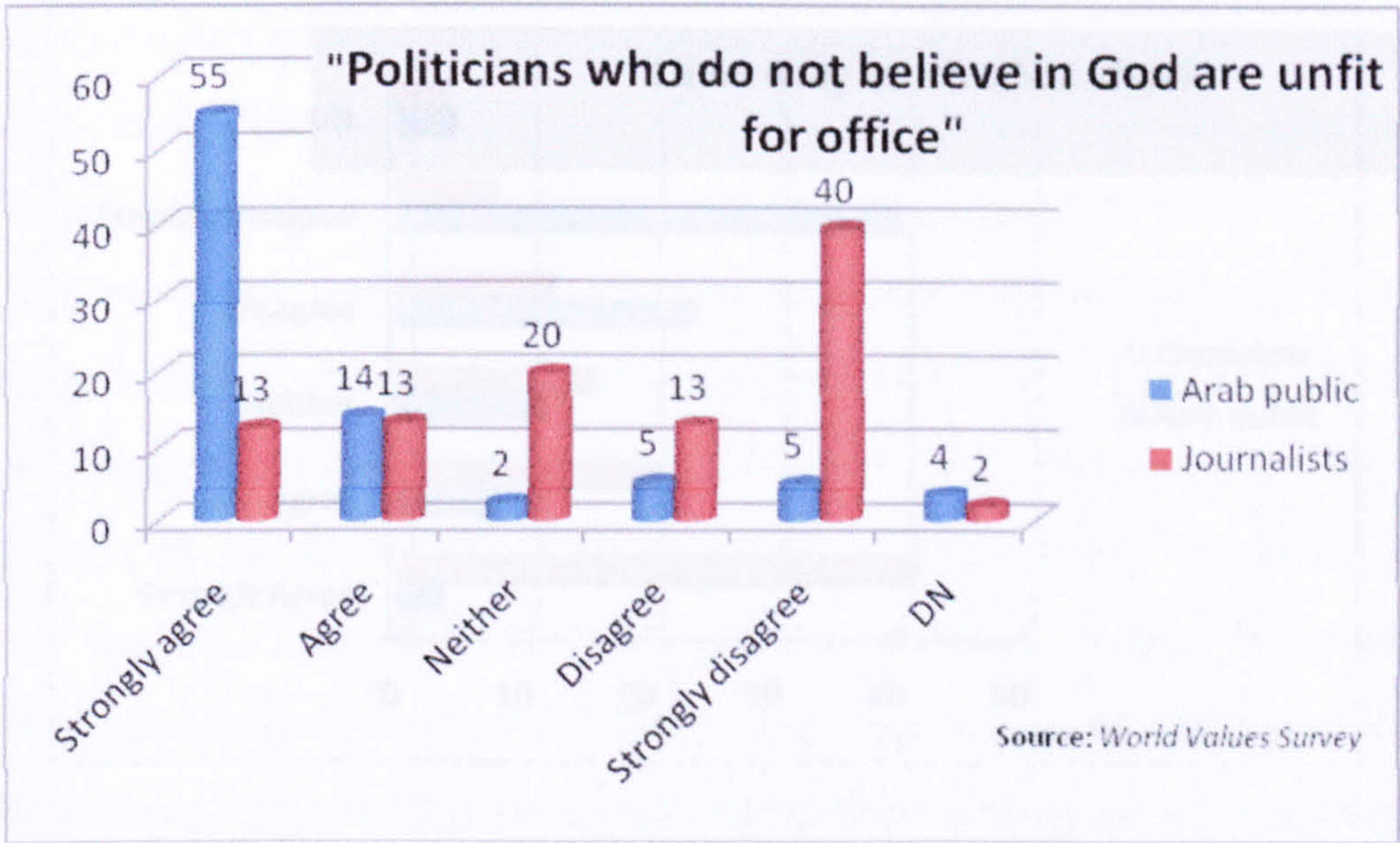
FIGURE 75: CLERICS (ARAB COMPARISONS)



It is significant that even those Arab journalists who described themselves as “religious” Muslims had a relatively dim view of the role of clerics, with more than a third of the “religious” journalists responding negatively to the questions about religious authorities providing adequate answers to moral problems and needs of the individuals (34.4%), problems of family life (35.4), and even spiritual needs (35.1%). Most dramatically, just under 50 percent of the “religious” journalists said clergy were not adequately addressing social problems, compared to less than 20 percent of the public who felt that way.

The journalists also had a vastly different view than the public of the importance of religion in politics. Just 26 percent of journalists agreed (“strongly agree” and “agree”) that politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for office, as compared to 69 percent of the public (Figure 23). Even the “religious” journalists were substantially more liberal than the public on this question, with about half agreeing that irreligious politicians should not serve.

FIGURE 76: POLITICIANS & GOD (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Asked to respond to the statement, "Religious figures should not influence how people vote," more than 80 percent of journalists agreed (and only 7 percent disagreed), compared to just over 40 percent of the public (Figure 77). Even more dramatically, more than 60 percent of journalists agreed that laws may be enacted that contradict *sharia*, while just 10 percent of the public concurred, driving home the degree to which Arab journalists espouse a decidedly more secular worldview than the public about and to whom they report (Figure 78).

FIGURE 77: CLERICS & VOTING (ARAB COMPARISONS)

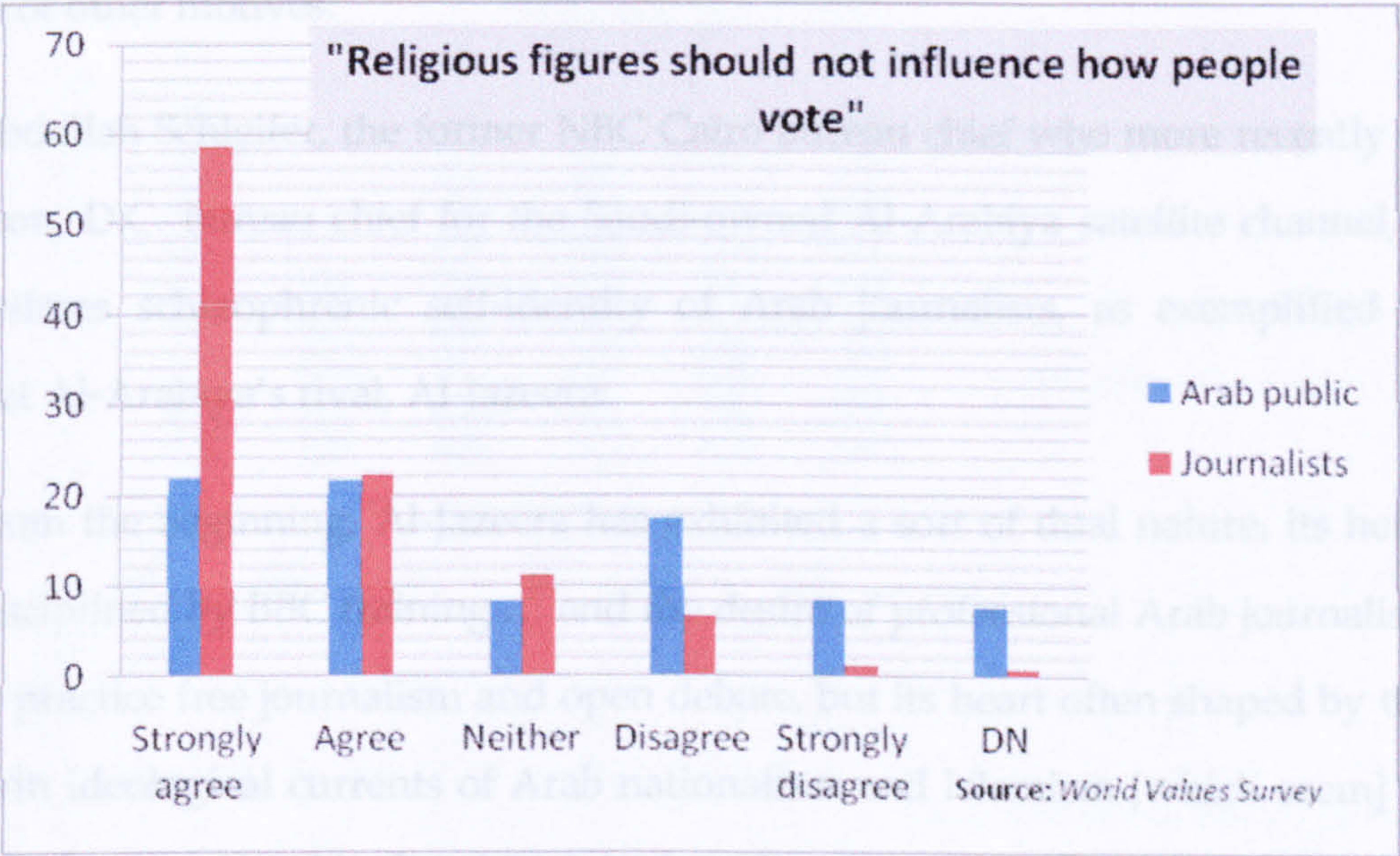
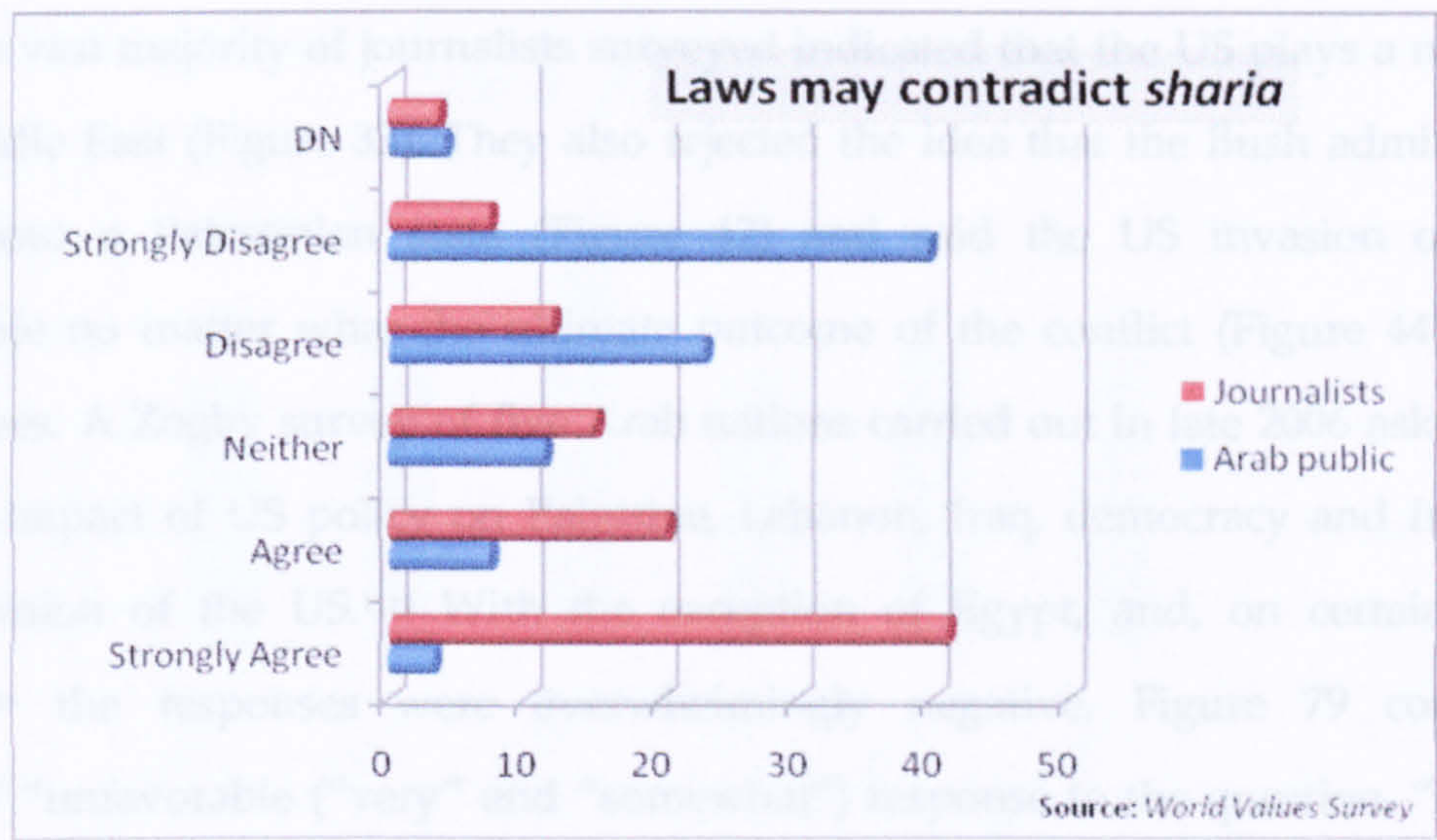


FIGURE 78: SHARIA (ARAB COMPARISONS)



The answers to these questions are important not only in how they define journalists versus their publics when it comes to the role of religion in daily life. They also tell us much about the *actual* – versus *declared* – sense of religiosity of the participants. There are a variety of reasons why an individual might describe him/herself as “religious” or “secular,” from a desire to identify with characteristics they think they should embody to a reluctance to discuss religiosity for professional (e.g. sense of journalistic “objectivity”) or personal reasons. The responses to the above questions would seem to both support the case for a “secular” identification on the part of those so-declared and indicate that the participants who chose not to declare their religiosity were not hiding a sense of religious purpose out of suspicion of other motives.

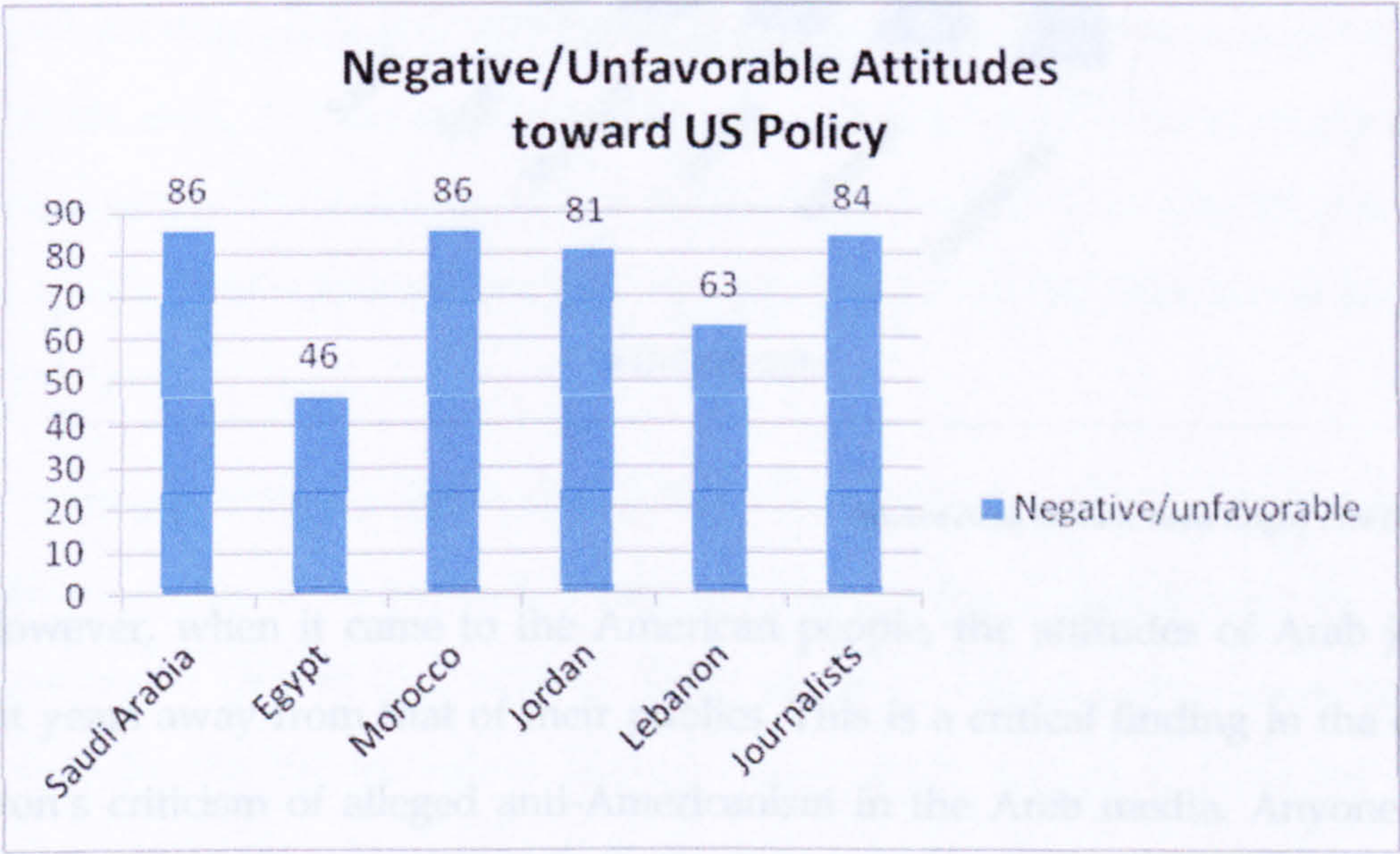
Abdallah Schleifer, the former NBC Cairo bureau chief who more recently served as Washington, D.C. bureau chief for the Saudi-owned Al-Arabiya satellite channel, spoke of the sometimes schizophrenic self-identity of Arab journalists, as exemplified by those working at Al-Arabiya’s rival, Al-Jazeera:

From the beginning, Al-Jazeera has exhibited a sort of dual nature, its head disciplined by BBC training ... and the desire of professional Arab journalists to practice free journalism and open debate, but its heart often shaped by the twin ideological currents of Arab nationalism and Islamism [which seem] to have best survived in the virtual Arab nation that politically-aware exiles and expatriates so easily inhabit abroad.¹¹¹³

3) OPINION OF THE US

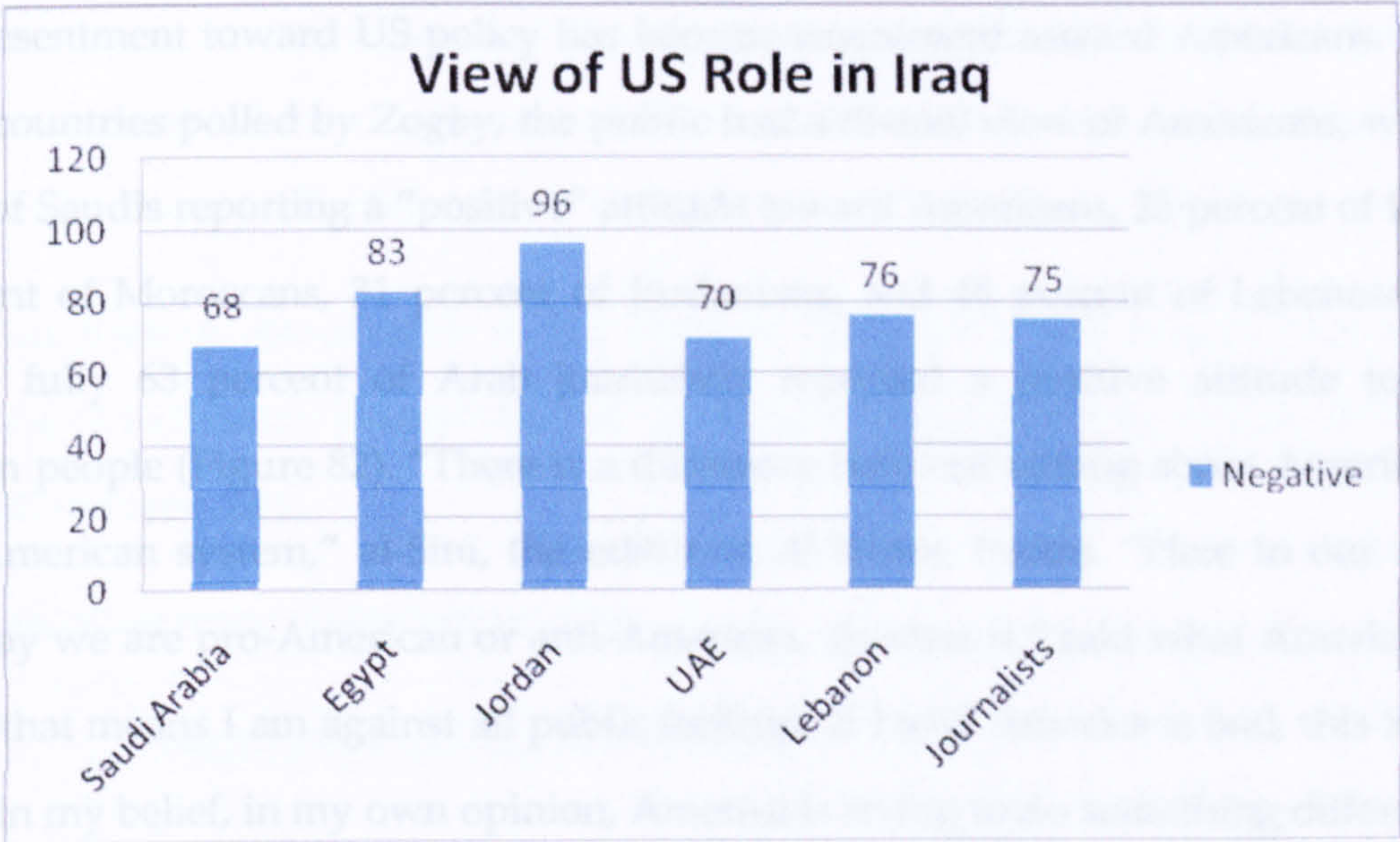
The vast majority of journalists surveyed indicated that the US plays a negative role in the Middle East (Figure 33). They also rejected the idea that the Bush administration is serious about a Palestinian state (Figure 42) and said the US invasion of Iraq was unacceptable no matter what the ultimate outcome of the conflict (Figure 44). The Arab public agrees. A Zogby survey of five Arab nations carried out in late 2006 asked Arabs to assess the impact of US policy on Palestine, Lebanon, Iraq, democracy and Iran on their overall opinion of the US.¹¹¹⁴ With the exception of Egypt, and, on certain questions, Lebanon,¹¹¹⁵ the responses were overwhelmingly negative. Figure 79 compares the journalists' "unfavorable ("very" and "somewhat") response to the question, "My attitude toward US policy is..." with the average negative attitude among the Arab public to the five policy issues above. Journalists were in synch with their publics on the incendiary issue of US military presence in Iraq (Figure 80), with negative feeling toward the US occupation running in the 70-90 percent range among journalists and the public alike. The only surprise in the data, as shown in Figure 81, is that journalists actually had a marginally less overall unfavorable view of the US than their publics (with the exception of Lebanon, where the pro-US attitudes among Christians skew the data).

FIGURE 79: US POLICY (ARAB COMPARISONS)



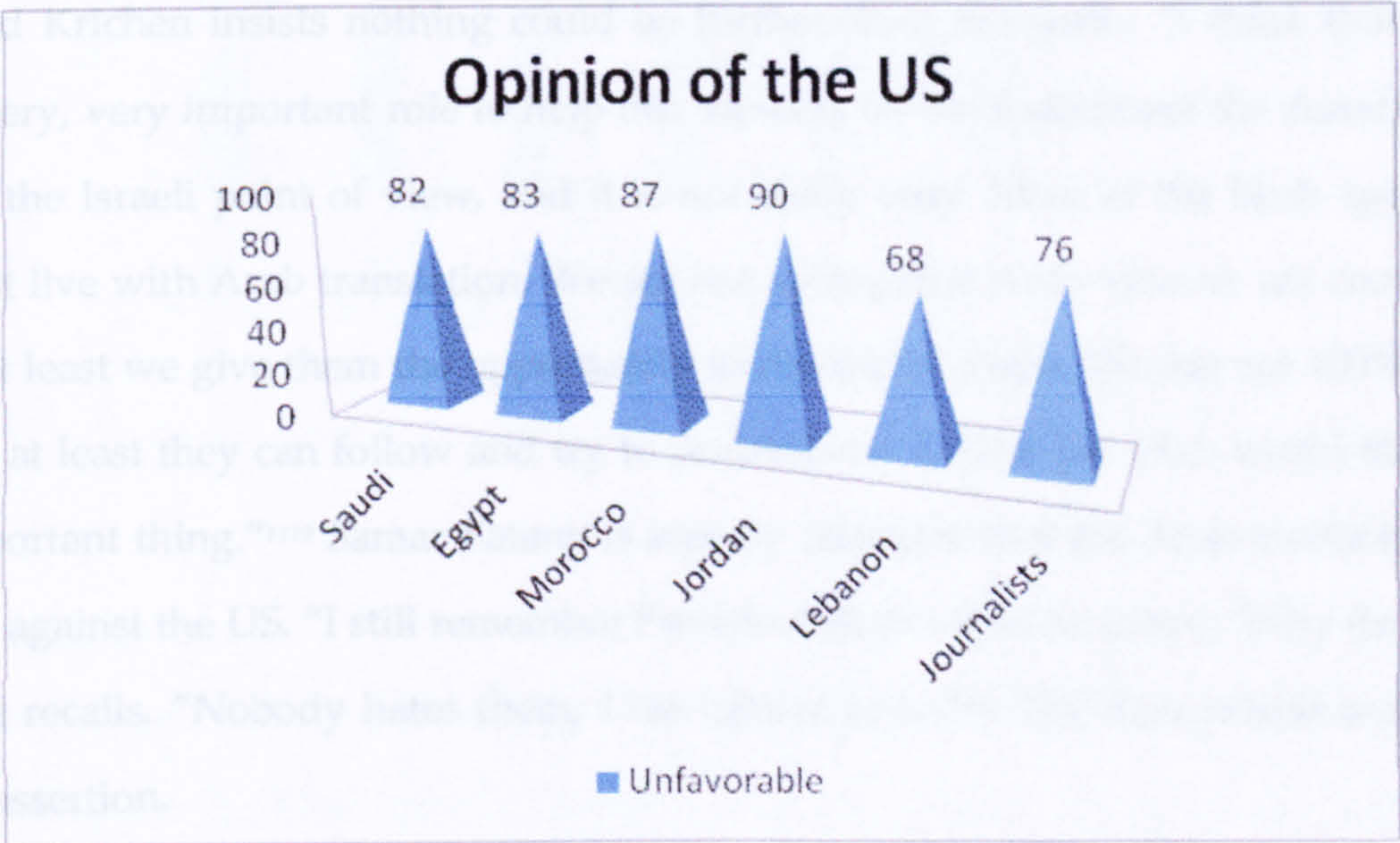
Source Arab attitude data: Zogby Five Nation 2006

FIGURE 80: IRAQ (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source Arab attitude data: Zogby Four Years Later 2007¹¹¹⁶

FIGURE 81: OPINION OF US (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source Arab attitude data: Zogby Five Nation 2006¹¹¹⁷

However, when it came to the American people, the attitudes of Arab journalists were light years away from that of their publics. This is a critical finding in the context of Washington’s criticism of alleged anti-Americanism in the Arab media. Anyone who has spent time in the Arab world in recent decades has a version of what I call the ‘taxi driver story,’ in which the driver – or waitress or desk clerk, etc – offers some variation on, ‘Oh, you’re American?! I love Americans; tell your president to go to Hell.’ The story fit no matter

the administration in Washington. Since 9/11, that distinction has narrowed. To a great extent, resentment toward US policy has become resentment toward Americans. In four of the five countries polled by Zogby, the public had a dismal view of Americans, with just 18 percent of Saudis reporting a "positive" attitude toward Americans, 23 percent of Egyptians, 28 percent of Moroccans, 31 percent of Jordanians, and 44 percent of Lebanese. In stark contrast, fully 63 percent of Arab journalists reported a positive attitude toward the American people (Figure 82). "There is a difference between talking about American policy or the American system," al-Sini, the editor of *Al-Watan*, insists. "Here in our media we cannot say we are pro-American or anti-American. Because if I said what America is doing is good, that means I am against all public feelings. If I said America is bad, this is not true, because in my belief, in my own opinion, America is trying to do something different, but in the wrong way."¹¹¹⁸

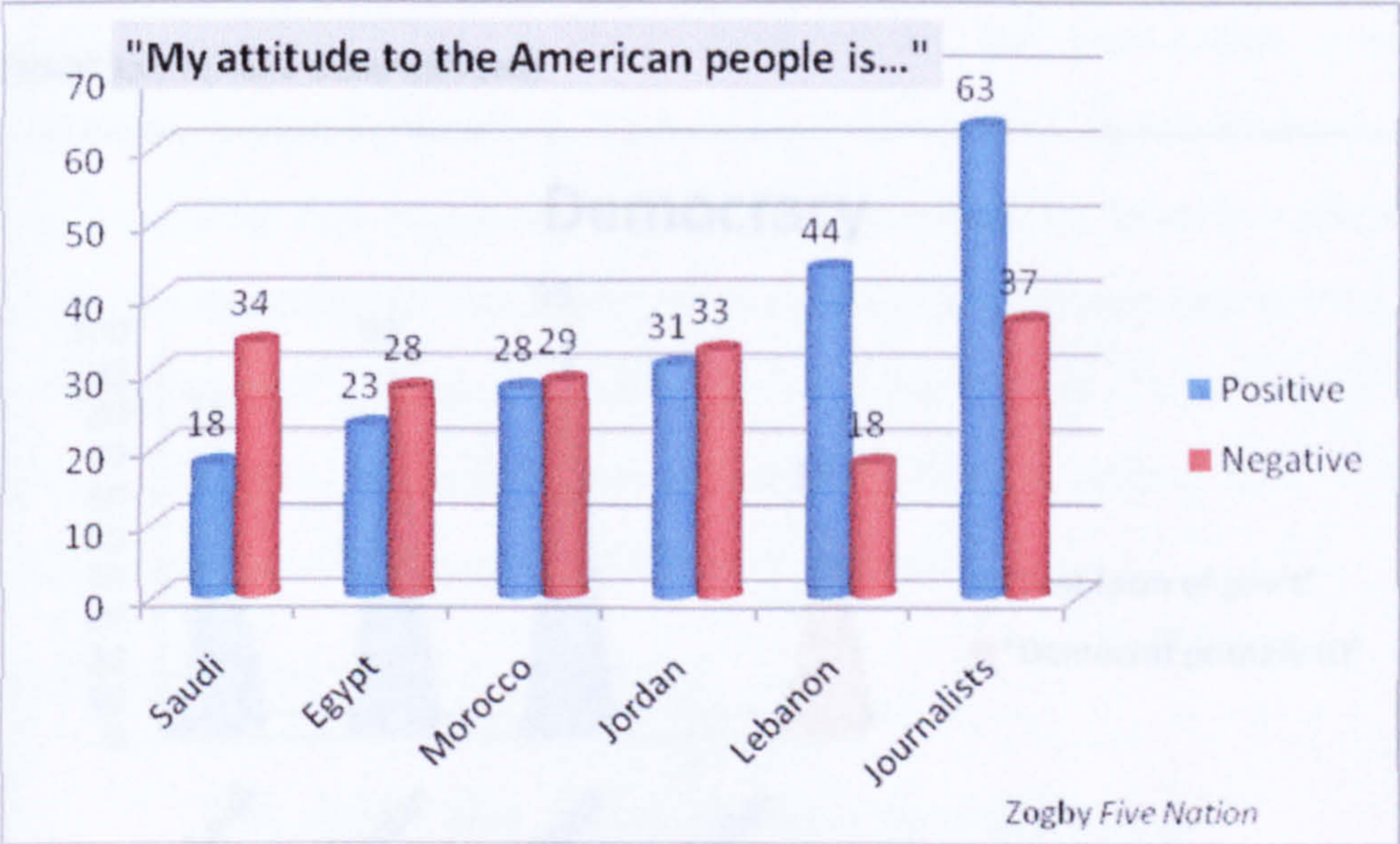
In the West, Al-Jazeera is perceived as the flag-carrier of anti-Americanism. Anchor M'Hamed Krichen insists nothing could be further from the truth. "I think that we have played very, very important role to help our viewers try to understand the American point of view, the Israeli point of view, and it is not really easy. Most of the Bush speeches are broadcast live with Arab translation. We are not saying that Arab viewers are convinced by all, but at least we give them the opportunity to see and to listen. We are not 100% OK with him, but at least they can follow and try to understand. I think for Arab world this is very, very important thing."¹¹¹⁹ Samar Fatany is equally adamant that the Arab media is not on a vendetta against the US. "I still remember President Bush when he asked, 'Why do they hate us?'" she recalls. "Nobody hates them, I can assure you."¹¹²⁰ The data would seem to bear out that assertion.

In contrast, Arab journalists take a dim view of the state of their own region. So do many ordinary Arabs. Arab journalists ranked human rights abuses among the top threats to the Arab world (Figure 28). Human rights are also a major concern among ordinary Arabs. Asked by the World Values Survey, "How much respect is there for individual human rights nowadays," 40 percent of Arabs in six countries responded that there is, "not much respect" or "no respect at all."¹¹²¹ "I think we have to talk about this," says columnist Aisha Ibrahim Sultan, who also hosts a program on Dubai TV. "Nobody talks about human

rights in our society. Nobody talks about political rights. All that these people were talking about was maybe the health service, the education service, but this is not the whole thing. We already have this, but we have to switch to something that is still a taboo until now. But I think it is time now to talk about this.”¹¹²²

This finding comes back to the issue of Shoemaker and Reese’s theory that the perceptions of individual journalists, and the ethos of the journalistic culture in which they operate, shape reporting.

FIGURE 82: AMERICAN PEOPLE (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source Arab attitude data: Zogby Five Nation 2006¹¹²³

4) DEMOCRACY

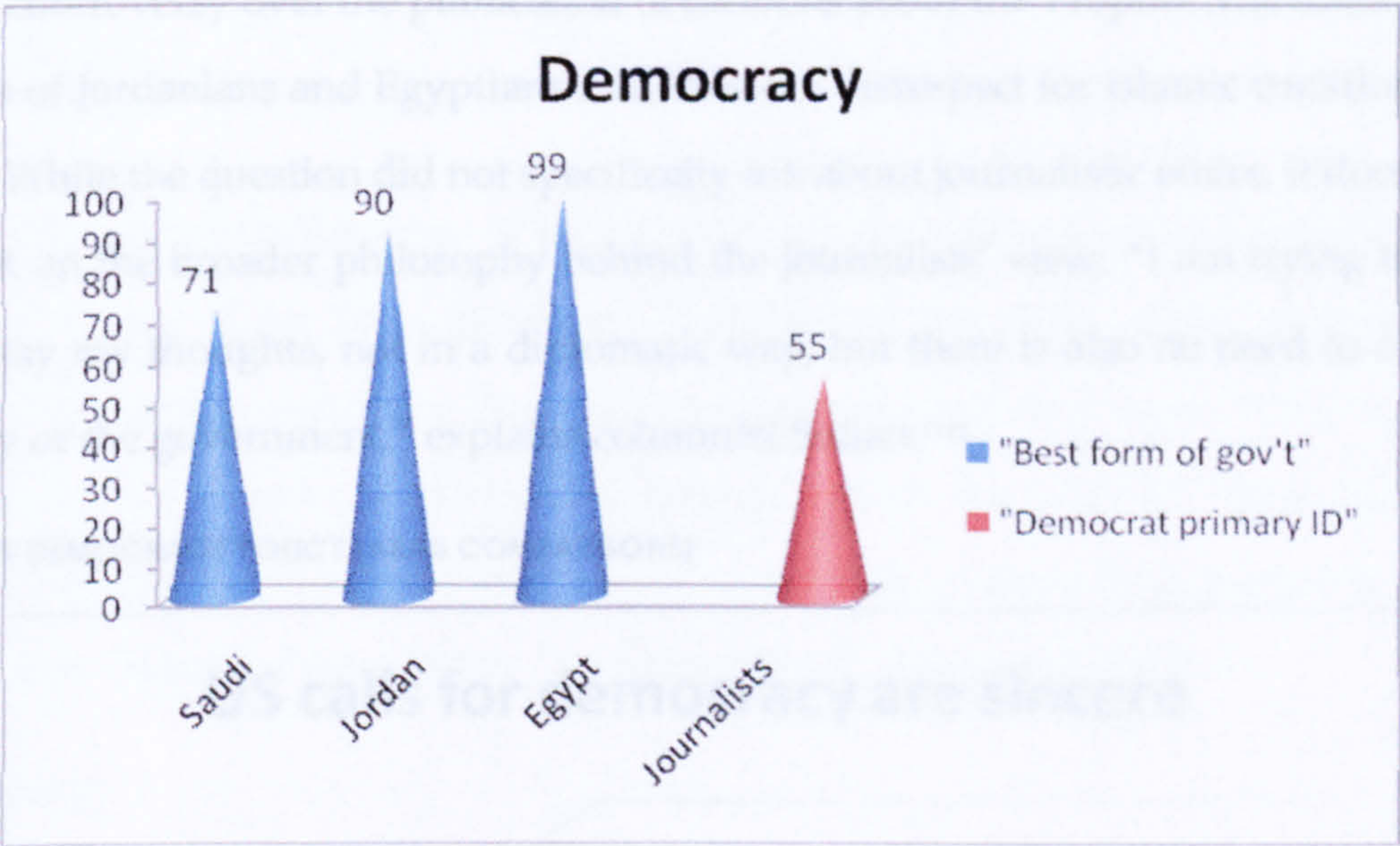
“Democrat” is overwhelmingly the primary political identity of the journalists surveyed (Figure 7). That specific question was not asked of the Arab public, but a significant majority questioned by Moaddel and Latif said democracy was “the best” form of government (Figure 83) and 70 percent of Arabs in six Arab countries said having a democratic political system was “very good” or “fairly good.”¹¹²⁴ “We need life like you, we need democracy like you, and we need freedom like you,” insists Ahmed Mansour, host of the Al-Jazeera program *Bela Hodood (No Limits)*.¹¹²⁵ The passion that some reporters bring to their mission of creating democratic change could be heard in the remarks of a Lebanese reporter at the support rally for Mai Chidiac, the LBC presenter maimed in a car bomb. His face lost in the sea of journalists jammed into a studio at the Lebanese Broadcasting

Corporation, he told his colleagues the assassination attempt must not silence the Lebanese media:

We – as we have always been and will continue to be – are carrying the flags of freedom and sovereignty and independence and will continue to be the loud voice pronouncing the truth so that we can hear ourselves.¹¹²⁶

Lebanese Christian radio producer Johnny el-Saddik told me he believes that writ extends beyond his country: “Lebanese workers in the media are dangerous for other countries’ president or authorities because we are teaching liberty for all the Arab world.”¹¹²⁷

FIGURE 83: DEMOCRACY (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source Arab attitude data: Moaddel *The Saudi Public Speaks* 2006¹¹²⁸

But that does not mean Arab journalists, or the Arab public, endorse -- or believe -- US calls for Arab democracy, which became a voluble element of US Middle East policy in early part of the second Bush administration. A series of public opinion polls in Arab countries coordinated by Shibley Telhami of the University of Maryland consistently found that “fewer than ten percent of Arabs believe that the spread of democracy was a true American objective, with most believing that oil, Israel, and weakening the Muslim world drive American policy in the region.”¹¹²⁹ The rejection of Hamas’ election victory in Palestine and the US refusal to deal with Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood after it won 150 seats in the 2006 Egyptian parliamentary elections, only added to that skepticism. On this issue,

journalists were in tune with their publics. In a 2007 Zogby poll, 65 percent of Arabs said democracy-building was not the real US objective (Figure 84); while close to 90 percent of Arab journalists disagreed with the suggestion that the US was sincere in its desire to foster democratic change.

Just as they were cynical about US democracy-building efforts, journalists were likewise skeptical of the Bush administration’s verbal endorsement of a Palestinian state, as were Egyptians in a 2007 survey (Figure 85).

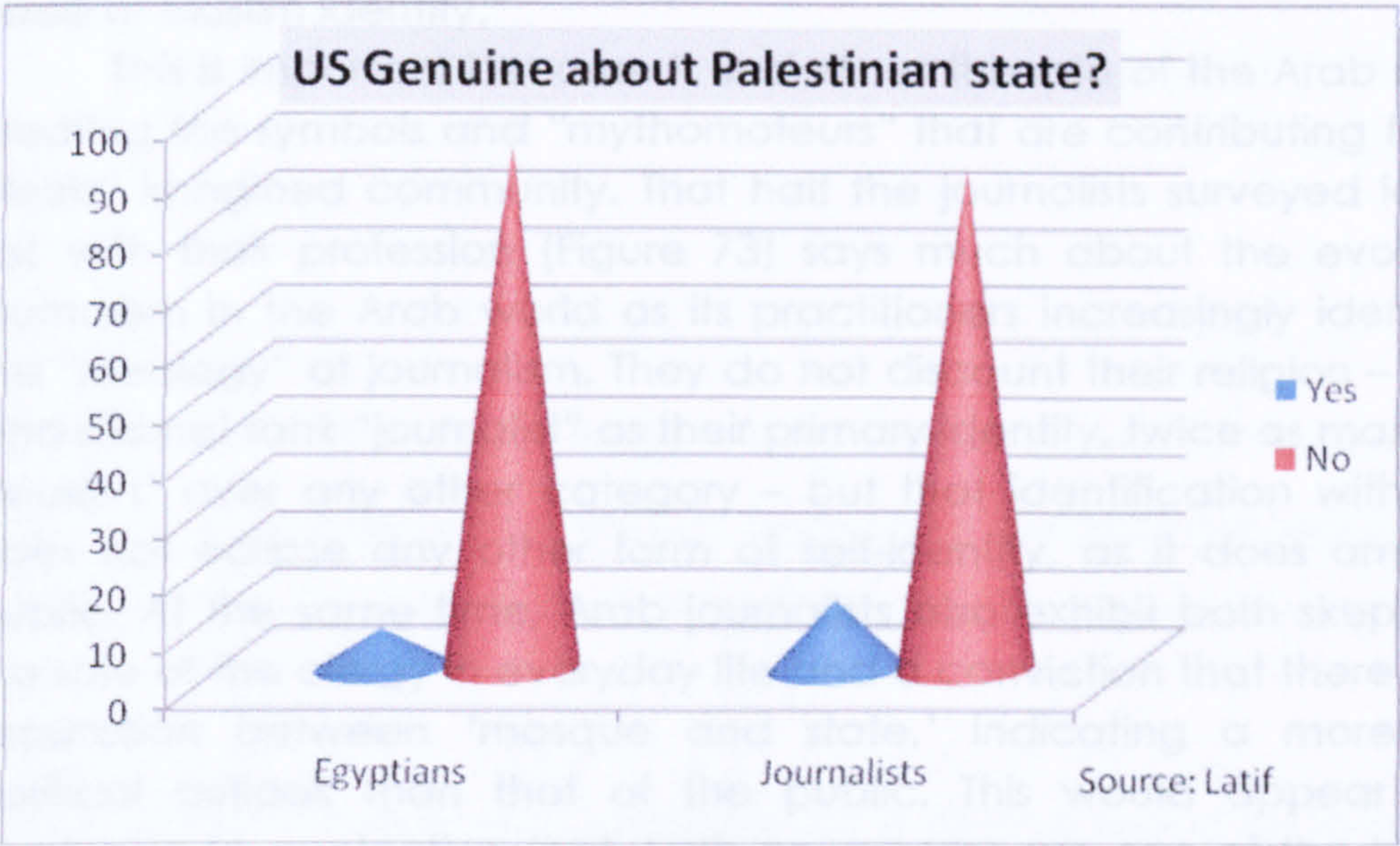
As discussed earlier, Arab journalists believe they need to balance their duties to inform the public and their responsibility to show respect. The Arab public agrees. Asked about the controversy over the publication of cartoons about the Prophet Muhammad, about 90 percent of Jordanians and Egyptians said Western disrespect for Islamic traditions was to blame.¹¹³⁰ While the question did not specifically ask about journalistic ethics, it does indicate agreement on the broader philosophy behind the journalists’ view. “I am trying to say my ideas, to say my thoughts, not in a diplomatic way, but there is also no need to clash with the society or the government,” explains columnist Sultan.¹¹³¹

FIGURE 84: US DEMOCRACY POLICY (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source Arab attitude data: Zogby Four Years Later 2007¹¹³²

FIGURE 85: US PALESTINE (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source: Latif¹¹³³

On the controversial issue of terrorism, more than 60 percent of journalists believe “terrorism” is one of the most important issues facing the Arab world. About the same number of Jordanians and more than half of Egyptians said they were “very concerned” about the rise of Islamic extremism.¹¹³⁴ Human rights was another issue high of the journalists’ priority list, a concern mirrored in Arab society, where 40 percent of those polled said there was “not much respect” or “no respect at all” for human rights.¹¹³⁵

5) SUMMARY

On many levels, Arab journalists effectively reflect the views of the Arab public-at-large. But on issues of religiosity and attitudes toward the American people, Arab journalists are far more secular and moderate than their publics. As Samir Khader of Al-Jazeera put it: “We are very liberal compared to the Arab societies; and we are very conservative compared to the West – very, very, conservative.”¹¹³⁶

R3 CONCLUSION: Arab journalists have a more secular, pan-Arab outlook and a far more positive view of the American people than the Arab public as whole – though religious identification still remains important to them – but otherwise largely mirror Arab society in their social and political attitudes.

R3 IMPLICATIONS: These results largely bear out the central thesis of this dissertation: “That Arab journalists at the dawn of the twenty-first century

embody a worldview that combines pan-Arabism with a heightened sense of Muslim identity."

This is important because it *underlines* the role of the Arab media in creating the symbols and "mythomoteurs" that are contributing to a new "Arab" imagined community. That half the journalists surveyed identified first with their profession (Figure 73) says much about the evolution of journalism in the Arab world as its practitioners increasingly identify with the "ideology" of journalism. They do not discount their religion – of those who did not rank "journalist" as their primary identity, twice as many chose "Muslim" over any other category – but that identification with religion does not eclipse any other form of self-identity, as it does among the public. At the same time, Arab journalists also exhibit both skepticism of the role of the clergy in everyday life and a conviction that there must be separation between 'mosque and state,' indicating a more secular political outlook than that of the public. This would appear to give credence to contention that Arab newsrooms are one of the breeding-grounds for the post-Islamism posited by Mandaville.

However, these findings *undermine* Shoemaker and Reese's hypothesis that, "The more elite the medium is, the less similar its workers will be to the general population,"¹¹³⁷ since there was no significant difference between the way journalists working for the elite pan-Arab media responded on the range of questions involving political, cultural and professional issues when compared to their less-elite colleagues working for domestic news organizations.

RESEARCH QUESTION 4:

HOW DO ARAB JOURNALISTS COMPARE THEIR REPORTING TO THAT OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS?

1) Overview

"[Western media] has always bragged when comparing itself to the Russian media but ... it should stop comparing itself with the Soviet Union and start comparing itself with us," Palestinian author and intellectual Mounir Shafik told a journalists' gathering in 2005.¹¹³⁸

Such comments are more than hyperbole. The traditional respect the Western – and particularly US – media commanded in Arab newsrooms has evaporated in recent years as Arab journalists saw American coverage become gripped by jingoism and stereotyping, exacerbated by the fact that expertise on the region is lacking since few US news organizations now have correspondents based in the Arab world. But Arab journalists are not naive. Those surveyed had a high opinion of the news organizations for which they worked – 86 percent agreed with the statement, "My news organization is doing an outstanding job" – but they were far less sanguine about the state of their industry. "There is no comparison, to be honest, between the press in the West and the press in the Arab world," according to Osama Mirghani, deputy editor-in-chief at *Asharq Al-Awsat*. "Having said that, the press in the Arab region is developing, is evolving and I think is moving forward."¹¹³⁹

But while they are critical of themselves, many Arab journalists resent the holier-than-thou attitude of US journalists who, as noted in a report about the proceedings of one US-Arab media dialogue, "viewed themselves as more experienced and more knowledgeable about the standards of the profession."¹¹⁴⁰ Said journalist Khaled Hroub, a participant at that same gathering, "Arab media maybe has so many shortcomings and misgivings, but still Western media cannot lecture them and they do not have the moral high ground to give lessons to our media."¹¹⁴¹

Responses to several survey questions indicate that such mixed feelings about the state of the Arab media, when contrasted to that of the US, are common among Arab journalists:

- About 30 percent disagreed both that the Arab media as a whole is becoming freer (Figure 17) and that they, as individual journalists, were freer to practice their craft.
- Roughly half those surveyed believe the Arab and US media are equally unfair (Figure 87);
- While they are not particularly impressed with the independence of the American media– a legacy of the Arab perception that American reporters have become mouthpieces for the Bush administration – almost 70 percent of Arab journalists describe the independence of their own media as “poor” (Figure 88);
- The regard Arab journalists have for the professionalism of the US media far outstrips their view of their own industry, with more than 40 percent of respondents giving the Arab media a “poor” rating and almost as many describing the professionalism of American journalists as “very good” (Figure 89).

FIGURE 86: US-ARAB FAIRNESS

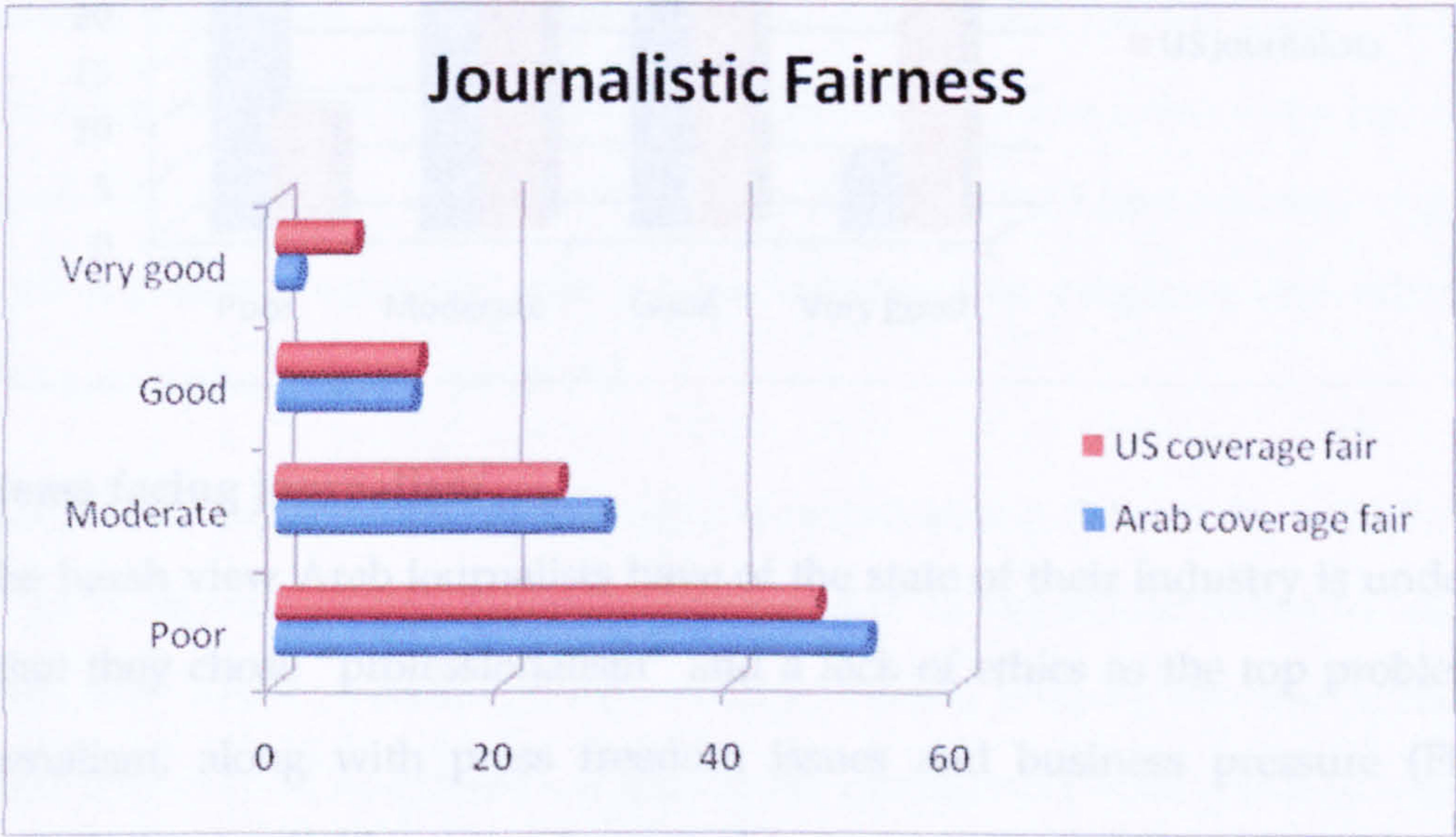


FIGURE 87: US-ARAB INDEPENDENCE

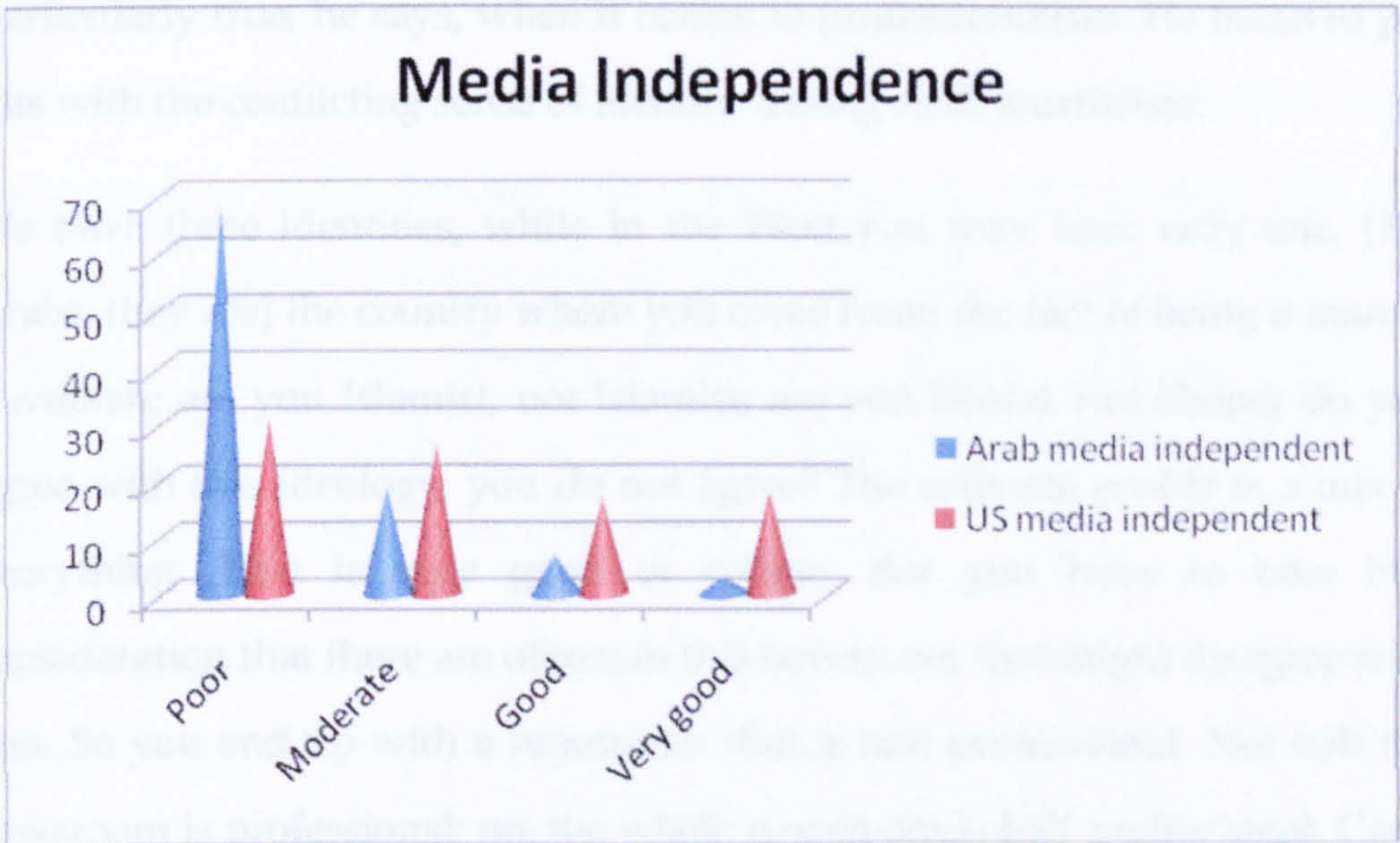


FIGURE 88: US-ARAB PROFESSIONALISM



2) Problems facing journalism

The harsh view Arab journalists have of the state of their industry is underlined by the fact that they chose “professionalism” and a lack of ethics as the top problems facing Arab journalism, along with press freedom issues and business pressure (Figure 90), demonstrating the parallel impacts of personal factors, corporate pressures and extra-media influences. “We have a childhood stage of media in developing countries,” says Hassan Satti

of *Asharq Al-Awsat*. Al-Jazeera's Khader agrees. "Do you think Al-Jazeera is like CNN, Fox News or CBS? No, we are not. We are still babies in the world of media. We are still babies." That is particularly true, he says, when it comes to professionalism. He believes part of the blame rests with the conflicting sense of identity among Arab journalists:

We have three identities, while in the West you may have only one. [For Arabs, they are] the country where you come from; the fact of being a man or a woman; are you Islamist, not Islamist; are you liberal, not liberal; do you agree with this ideology, you do not agree? The ultimate profile is a mix of everything. That is very good of course. But you have to take into consideration that there are others in this newsroom that might disagree with you. So you end up with a newsroom that is half professional. Not half the newsroom is professional; no, the whole newsroom is half professional. Can I tell you now that I am a professional? No I am not.¹¹⁴²

Many top editors, particularly on the pan-Arab satellite channels, bemoan the shortage of experienced professionals and the relative trickle of new journalists emerging from the region's universities. Hisham Kassem, founder of the independent Egyptian daily *Al-Masri Al-Youm* says the traditional role of the Arab media as government mouthpiece is also to blame for the shortage of quality journalists. So soured was he on the prevailing newsroom culture, that as he prepared to start yet another independent newspaper in 2007, Kassem vowed not to hire any reporters from the government-owned press. "It is easier to teach journalism to smart young people than to get journalists to unlearn the bad habits they have learned elsewhere," he told me.¹¹⁴³ This absence of trained professionals argues for the need to put substantial resources into academic journalism programs and other forms of training infrastructure in the Arab world.

Giselle Khouri of Al-Arabiya, meanwhile, epitomizes the uneasy – and sometimes contradictory – aspirations of Arab journalists toward Western-style mores of objectivity or fairness and their desire to create political change. Khouri believes that the politicization of news – especially at rival Al-Jazeera – is among her profession's most grievous failings.

Just like the Western media had a lot of mistakes in its war coverage, the Arab media as well had a lot of mistakes. First: confusing the issues meaning that the issue of Iraq is not the issue of Palestine. ... Once we mix Usama Bin Laden with Yasser Arafat and Mahmoud Abbas and Khaled Meshaal, then we cannot, as Arabs demand a fair case. This is a major mistake that was practiced whether intentionally or unintentionally by one of the Arab channels. The second mistake is that the national dialogue refers to everything that comes from the West as treason and to everything that comes from inside the region as national. This is wrong.

Yet at the same time, since the assassination of her husband, anti-Syrian columnist Samir Kassir, Khouri has been on a personal crusade:

Before Samir [was killed], I had another role than now. Before, [as a] journalist, I was – I do not want to say objective – but faithful a little bit. But after the death of [former Prime Minister Rafik] Hariri [in a car bomb] and with the revolution [against the Syrian military presence in Lebanon], and after Samir, I think I am a fighter, a politician-fighter now with my talk show. I do not compromise and I push for a new reform in the Arab world. Al Nahda [Renaissance]. We are in a big conflict, in a big war between the people who have the culture of death and the culture of life.¹¹⁴⁴

Newspaper columnist Aisha Ibrahim Sultan, who also hosts a talk show on Dubai TV, says that just because Arab journalists admire some aspects of the American media does not mean they want to – or should – try to recreate US-style journalism in the Arab world. “Do you think that in the Arab world they have also to do like the American journalists? I think there is a difference between the American society or state and the Arab state. There is difference in everything.” Most fundamentally, she says, US journalism and Arab journalism – like the societies themselves – are at very different points in their evolution.

“When did American people start reading the newspaper and when did we start reading the newspaper? The history of the newspaper in my country maybe is 30 years, but in America they started clashing with the government

from maybe 150 years. So we need to build step by step our experience, our history in the journalism, in everything. We need to build our experience. I do not want to set the American experience and say I want to be like Americans. I cannot. This is not logic. This is not logical at all. You can buy a chair, American chair or decoration and put it in your house. But you cannot buy an idea. [For] an idea, you need the time.”¹¹⁴⁵

Al-Maenna of *Arab News* concurs: “The essence of the role of the journalist does not change, but the circumstances change,”¹¹⁴⁶ while Nabil Dajani, a communications professor at the American University in Beirut, insists that media must be judged in its cultural context:

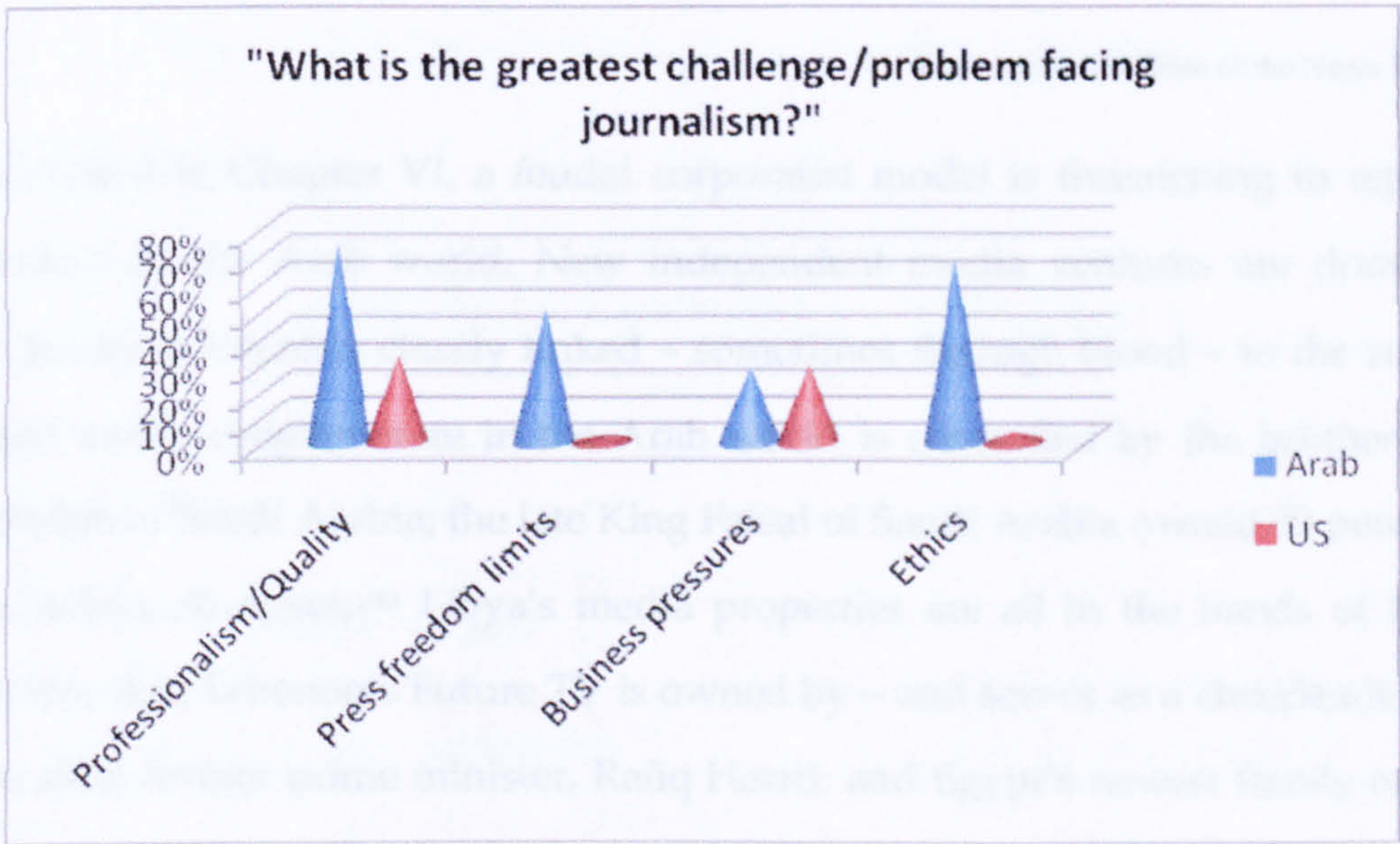
The social and moral responsibility of the media in their societies and regions need to be taken into account in order to provide factual and fair coverage of events. We cannot assume a universal model of media operation. Rather, we need to recognize that the structure, content, and, therefore, operation of the mass media are unique to the society within which they operate.¹¹⁴⁷

All of those quoted above aspire to greater professionalism in their industry, but Satti says it is unrealistic to expect a sea-change overnight. “The Arab mentality is very fragile. When I’m talking about professionalism, I don’t mean *absolute* professionalism.”¹¹⁴⁸ Satti’s boss, Osama Mirghani, agrees that “it’s a matter of degree. The press is free here, but there are influences. We know the best newspapers have restrictions laid on them.”¹¹⁴⁹ Others say the influences do not stop at overt corporate or government pressures. “Arab journalists, in general, have positions that reflect their societies, on political and other matters. We see *religious programs that are politicized with religious flavor*. All social issues are being presented from one dimension,” according to Diana Moukalled, senior correspondent at Lebanon’s Future TV, owned by the family of the late Rafiq Hariri, “I don’t think we’ve reached the stage where we really have high professional standards.”¹¹⁵⁰ But the debate over standards and ethics simultaneously takes places at multiple levels, from discussion of training, culture and bias to the very human challenges faced by all journalists as they cover conflict and violence, as in AFP correspondent Nayla Rassouk’s account of how she decided which among many badly injured children in an Iraqi hospital ward she would profile:

It's a very difficult decision to make. It's an impossible decision to make. When you're standing there and they're all looking at you to decide which one you're going to speak with [but] if you take one example and write it in a way that [encapsulates] all the suffering that you saw that day in every single one of them, then you've done your duty.¹¹⁵¹

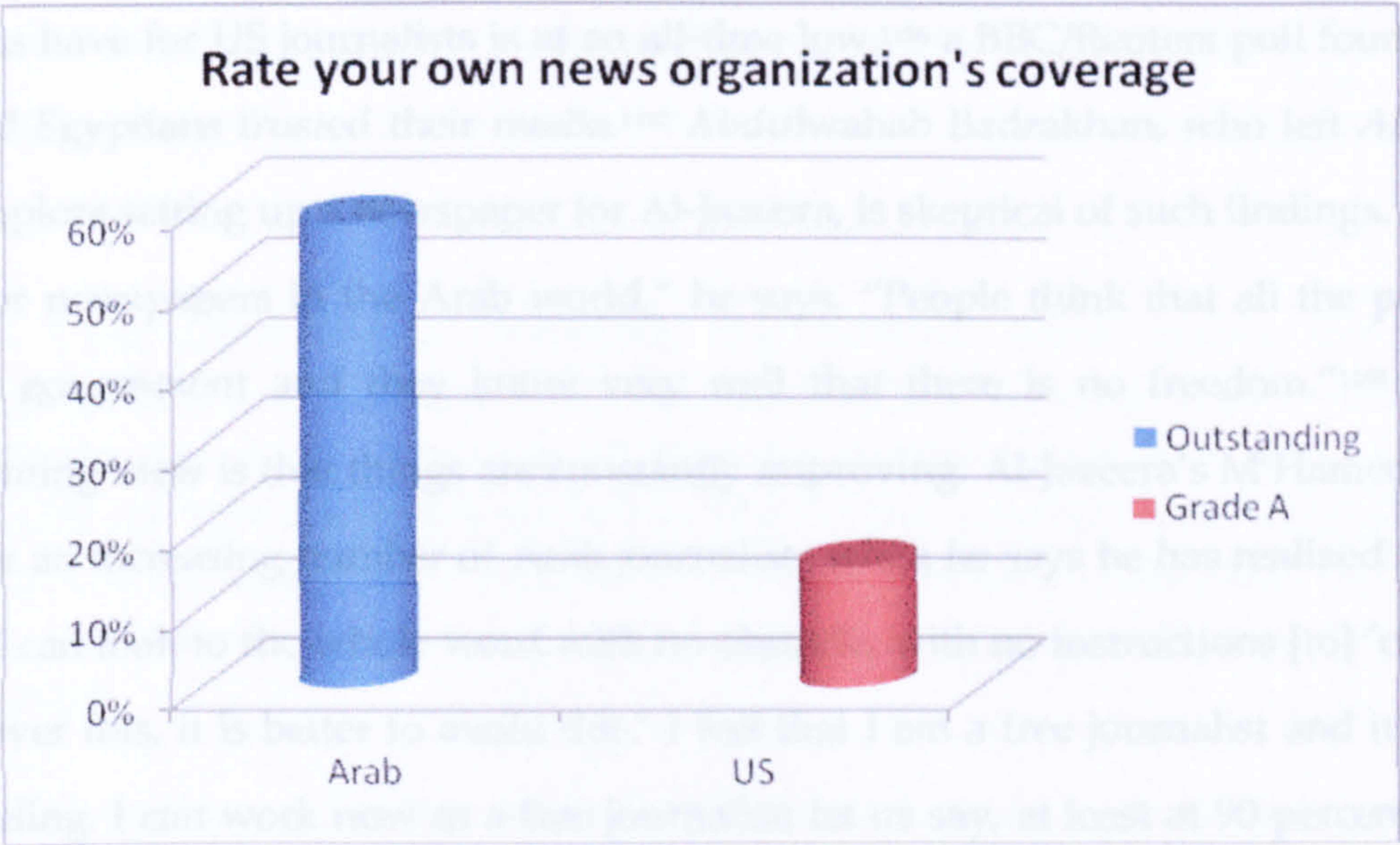
Two issues involving professionalism resonate with US journalists, who are likewise concerned about the quality of journalism along with the pressures resulting from media conglomeratization. However, while Arab journalists were critical of their industry-at-large, Arab journalists were far more enamored of their own news organization's coverage than were US editors and reporters (Figure 91).

FIGURE 89: US-ARAB PROBLEMS



US data source: *The State of the News Media 2007*¹¹⁵²

FIGURE 90: US-ARAB OWN ORGANIZATION



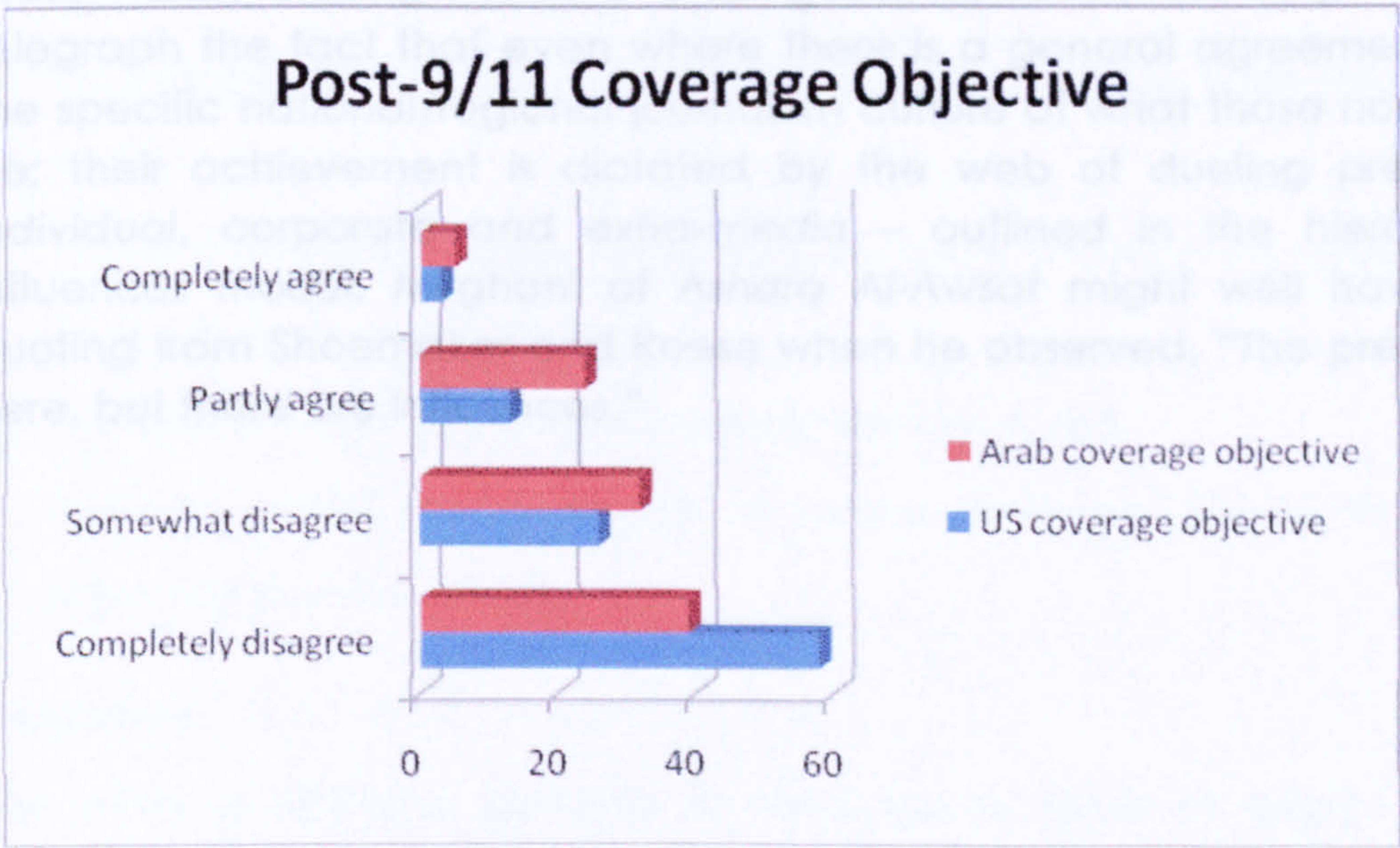
US data source: The State of the News Media 2007¹¹⁵³

As noted in Chapter VI, a feudal corporatist model is threatening to replace state media control in the Arab world. New independent media ventures are dominated by powerful business interests closely linked – sometimes through blood – to the ruling elite. The largest media conglomerate in the Arab world is controlled by the brother-in-law of King Abdallah of Saudi Arabia; the late King Faisal of Saudi Arabia owned 39 percent of the shares in *Asharq Al-Awsat*;¹¹⁵⁴ Libya’s media properties are all in the hands of Muammar Qadaffi’s son, Seif; Lebanon’s Future TV is owned by – and serves as a cheerleader for – the son of the slain former prime minister, Rafiq Hariri; and Egypt’s newest family of channels is being built by a powerful tycoon who controls a construction and telecommunications empire closely linked to the Mubarak regime. The journalists surveyed acknowledged this situation when they ranked “government control,” “media ownership,” and “corporate pressure” among the top challenges to Arab journalism. As noted earlier, even the poster-child for Arab media independence, Al-Jazeera, operates within red-lines. “I have restrictions. I am allowed to do this. And I am not allowed to do that,” the channel’s senior producer, Samir Khader, readily concedes. “It is a game. It is really a game; a game of survival.”¹¹⁵⁵

Despite all that, Arab editors and reporters still gave themselves slightly higher marks than they gave American reporters for post-9/11 coverage of US Middle East policy

(Figure 92). At least some elements of the public appear to agree. While the regard Americans have for US journalists is at an all-time low,¹¹⁵⁶ a BBC/Reuters poll found that 74 percent of Egyptians trusted their media.¹¹⁵⁷ Abdulwahab Badrakhan, who left *Al-Hayat* in 2006 to explore setting up a newspaper for Al-Jazeera, is skeptical of such findings. “There is a crisis for newspapers in the Arab world,” he says. “People think that all the papers are from the government and they know very well that there is no freedom.”¹¹⁵⁸ Still, the overwhelming view is that things are constantly improving. Al-Jazeera’s M’Hamed Krichen speaks for an increasing number of Arab journalists when he says he has realized a lifelong dream. “I can look to the whole word with no obstacle, with no instructions [to] ‘cover this, do not cover this, it is better to avoid this.’ I feel that I am a free journalist and it is a very happy feeling. I can work now as a free journalist; let us say, at least at 90 percent. This 10 percent is OK. We are not always satisfied, not always 100 percent. But it is closer.”¹¹⁵⁹

FIGURE 91: US-ARAB POST-911



3) Summary

Arab journalism is struggling to remove the twin yokes of state control and the influence of powerful corporate interests close to the ruling families of the region. Arab journalists acknowledge this challenge. They are proud that some Arab news organizations are making progress toward true independence. When questioned about specific measures of media performance, they acknowledge that the Arab media comes up lacking. But when asked to rate their overall coverage in recent years, they believe they have outperformed

their American colleagues. The overall sense among Arab journalists of the state of their industry *vis a vis* media in the US is perhaps best summed up by the motto of the pan-Arab channel Al-Arabiya: "Closer to the Truth."¹¹⁶⁰ Perhaps not quite the whole truth, but getting closer every day.

R4 CONCLUSION: Arab journalists are brutally frank about the lack of independence, fairness and professionalism among their media. They admire the professionalism of their US counterparts, but give them low marks for fairness and independence. In the post-9/1 era, Arab journalists don't think their own media has been particularly objective, but do they do believe the Arab media been marginally more objective than the US media.

R4 IMPLICATIONS: Implicit in this evaluation is a sense that Arab journalists, like those of other cultures, do aspire to some (perhaps elusive) benchmark of professionalism, as seen in their low regard for "professionalism" and "ethics" with the Arab media and high regard for those norms among their US colleagues. However, the responses also telegraph the fact that even where there is a general agreement within the specific national/regional journalism culture of what those norms may be; their achievement is dictated by the web of dueling pressures – individual, corporate and extra-media – outlined in the hierarchy-of-influences model. Mirghani of *Asharq Al-Awsat* might well have been quoting from Shoemaker and Reese when he observed, "The press is free here, but there are influences."

RESEARCH QUESTION 5:

IS THERE A SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE ATTITUDES OF ARAB JOURNALISTS PROFESSING A HIGH LEVEL OF RELIGIOSITY AND THOSE PROFESSING A MORE SECULAR OUTLOOK?

1) OVERVIEW

Across the board, journalists responding to the survey who described themselves as “religious” Muslims and those who described themselves as “secular” or chose not to declare their religiosity demonstrated a significant measure of agreement on a broad array of critical issues. These included:

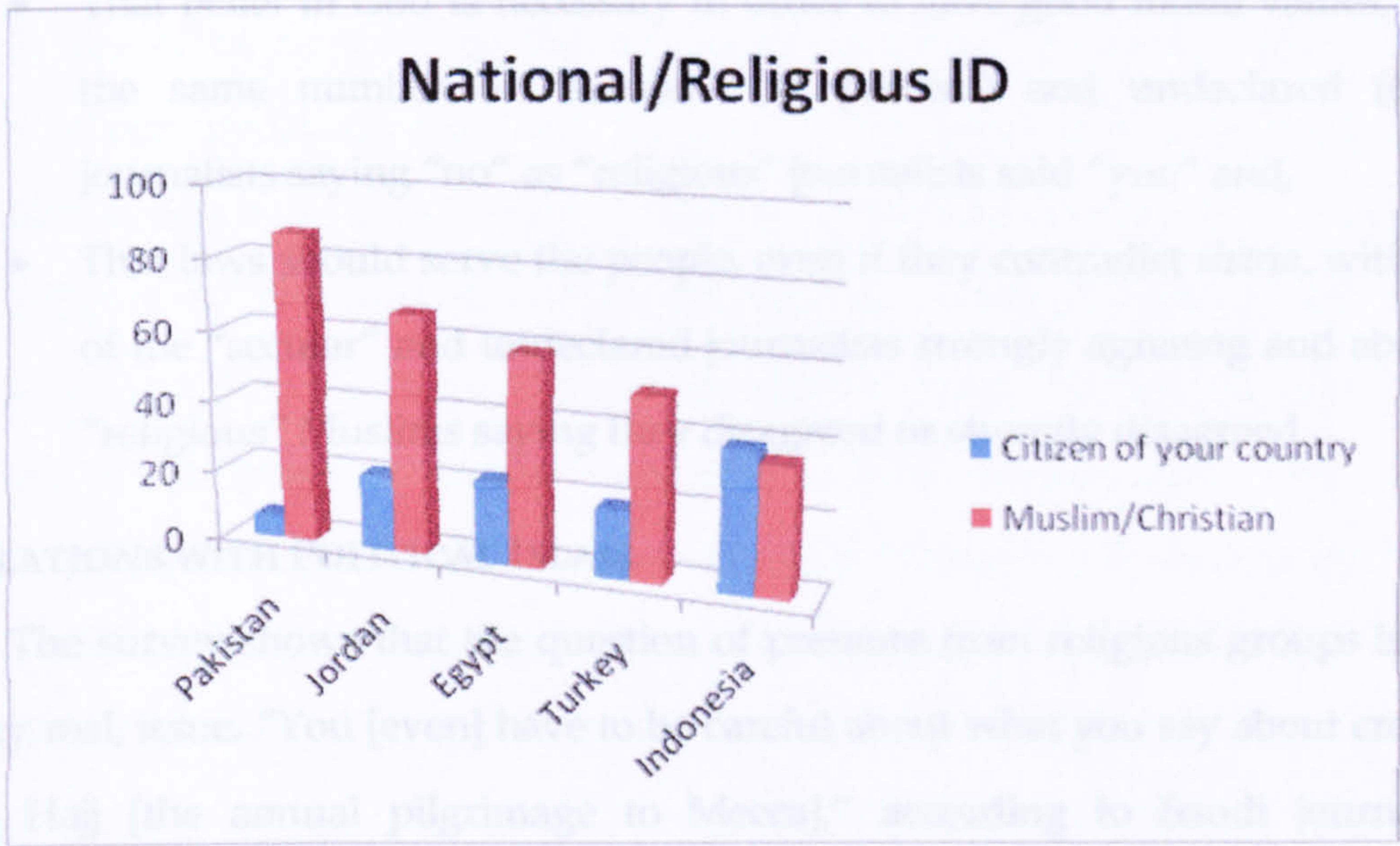
- The greatest threats facing the Arab world, its most important issues and the most significant challenges facing Arab journalism;
- Journalistic objectivity and ethics;
- The fairness, independence and professionalism of the US, Arab and European media;
- The need for balance between informing the public and showing respect to those about whom the media reports;
- The need for Arab society to be gradually improved; and,
- Attitudes toward the US (though, in general, “religious” journalists felt more negatively than the others).

2) SELF-IDENTITY

The points of difference primarily involved specific issues of religion and self-identity. Almost half the self-declared “religious” Muslims answered, “Above all, I am a Muslim,” but more than 40 percent joined the “secular” (52 percent) and undeclared participants in selecting, “Above all, I am a journalist.” A combined 25 percent of “secular” and 20 percent of undeclared journalists said their primary identity was Arab or Muslim (about the same for each). The number in all three groups identifying themselves most closely with their individual nation was negligible. In this, the journalists were in synch with the broader Arab public (Figure 93). A 2006 Pew poll found that less than a quarter of

Jordanians and Egyptians identified first with their individual country, while 67 percent of Jordanians and 53 percent of Egyptians consider religion their primary identity.¹¹⁶¹

FIGURE 92: NTL/RELIGIOUS ID (ARAB COMPARISONS)



Source: Pew Global Attitudes Project 2006

Much the same was true on the issue of political philosophy, with just under 30 percent of “religious” Muslims declaring themselves to be Islamists, while more than a third (35 percent) joined the “secular” (68.5 percent) and undeclared (61 percent) journalists in selecting “democrat” as their primary political identity. Almost as many “religious” Muslims (33 percent) as “secular” (39 percent) identified first with the Arab nation, while almost half of the “religious” Muslims (48 percent) and 31 percent of the undeclared said their geographic identity lay with the Muslim world.

“Religious” journalists gave more priority to the Palestinian cause and ending the US occupation of Iraq, but otherwise the primary areas of divergence involved religion. “Religious” Muslims disagreed with their colleagues on several issues:

- That pressure from religious groups was a significant challenge for the Arab media and over the role played by religious authorities.
- That clerics do “provide adequate answers to problems of family life,” with twice as many “religious” journalists (60 percent) agreeing to the statement;

- That religious authorities “provide adequate answers for social problems,” with twice as many “secular” journalists answering “no” than “religious” journalists answered “yes.”
- That belief in God is necessary in order to have good moral values, with about the same number of “secular” (61 percent) and undeclared (68 percent) journalists saying “no” as “religious” journalists said “yes;” and,
- That laws should serve the people, even if they contradict *sharia*, with about half of the “secular” and undeclared journalists strongly agreeing and about half the “religious” Muslims saying they disagreed or strongly disagreed.

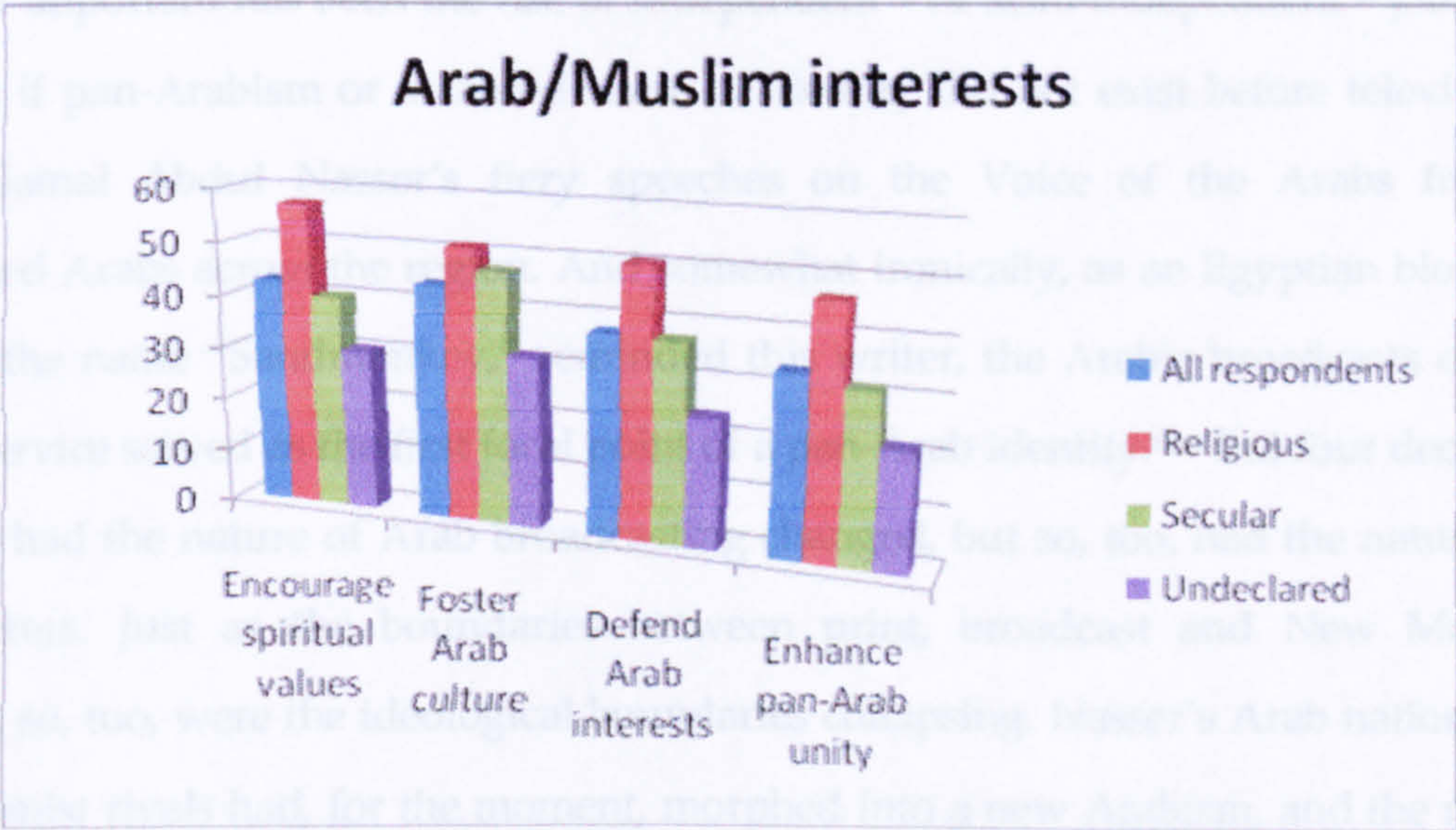
3) RELATIONS WITH POLITICAL ISLAM

The survey shows that the question of pressure from religious groups is a divisive, but very real, issue. “You [even] have to be careful about what you say about crowd control in the Hajj [the annual pilgrimage to Mecca],” according to Saudi journalist Abcer Mishkas.¹¹⁶² Such pressure on non-conforming journalists ranges from overt attacks by religious militants in places like Iraq, Palestine, Yemen and Algeria, to undercover “infiltration” of newsrooms by Islamists in the Sudan,¹¹⁶³ to more subtle pressures akin to the lobbying the US media faces from religious lobbies. Some media even play to those biases. Lebanon’s LBC generates the majority of its advertising revenues from the huge Saudi Arabian market. So in late 2006, it launched a daily Saudi news program, *Aishu Mana (Live with Us)*, which employs three Saudi anchors. One of those is Mona Siraj, an outspoken Saudi woman who dons a head covering on-camera to placate conservatives but does not wear one in everyday life. “That makes it difficult for her,” another LBC staffer told me, “since she doesn’t want to be seen in public without the veil because she knows the audience might react if someone publishes her picture that way.” That dual identity extends to the station itself, which broadcasts some programming via a terrestrial signal for the domestic Lebanese market and other programs via satellite for the rest of the Arab world. “If you look at LBC-Lebanon, which is mainly a Christian station, when it goes LBC-Sat, it becomes a Muslim-oriented station,” according to Lebanese University Professor Mahmoud Tarabay. “We’re talking about a dual identity – Christian in Lebanon and Muslim on satellite.”¹¹⁶⁴ It part because it consciously caters to the region’s Muslim viewers, MBC is well aware of the power of the religious conservatives. When one of its programs ran a viewer poll asking

whether women should appear on the air, within 90 minutes the channel received almost 100,000 votes against. “The conservatives are so organized; the liberals are not,” one LBC producer told me.

It should be no surprise that far more “religious” journalists (64 percent) chose “protect Islamic tradition” than did “secular” (17 percent) and undeclared (22 percent) journalists, or that more than half the “religious” journalists identified “encourage spiritual values” (Figure 94). However, it is noteworthy that 40 percent of “secular” and 30 percent of undeclared journalists also listed “Encourage spiritual values” as top journalistic role, while about half of all “religious” journalists chose “Defend Arab interests” and “Foster Arab culture” as the primary role, while 46 percent chose “Enhance pan-Arab unity.” For each of those, more “religious” journalists chose those “Arab” causes than did “secular” or undeclared journalists.

FIGURE 93: ARAB/MUSLIM INTERESTS



That last point is worth repeating; 40 percent of self-declared “secular” journalists listed the defense of spiritual values as the primary job of an Arab journalist, while more “religious” journalists gave priority to “Arab” causes than did “secular or “undeclared” journalists. The figures attest to the degree to which a new Arabism is rising among the region’s journalists that is blurring the differentiation between “Arab” and “Muslim” causes and priorities. Marwan Matni is a Christian producer at LBC. Not only do most Lebanese Christians have little sympathy for Muslims causes, but many do not even consider

themselves Arabs. Rather, they think of themselves as “Phoenicians” or descendents of the Christian Crusaders. Matni says that was true of him, as well – until the 2006 Israel-Hezbollah war. As the conflict dragged on, he told me, “I felt myself changing. Lebanon was under attack. We were all Lebanese. By the end, I, too, felt myself to be Hezbollah.”¹¹⁶⁵ Matni is an example of the degree to which Arab journalists embody – and inspire – the new Arabism. He produced news and current affairs programs that drove public opinion to support Hezbollah during the conflict even as he was himself being influenced by the events playing out on the ground.

Other factors contributing to that “Arab” identity include the shared stance toward US policy and Israel, the reaction to the emotive footage broadcast by the pan-Arab channels, the way in which pan-Arab television interacts with its audience, the emergence of MSA as the *lingua franca* of pan-Arab television, and the new genre of pan-Arab entertainment programs to go far beyond those traditionally produced in Egypt and Syria. But most important has been the rise of independent – or semi-independent – journalism. It is not as if pan-Arabism or a shared sense of identity did not exist before television came along. Gamal Abdul Nasser’s fiery speeches on the Voice of the Arabs from Cairo galvanized Arabs across the region. And somewhat ironically, as an Egyptian blogger, who goes by the name “Sandmonkey,” reminded this writer, the Arabic broadcasts of the BBC World Service served as the first focal point of a pan-Arab identity.¹¹⁶⁶ But four decades later, not only had the nature of Arab broadcasting changed, but so, too, had the nature of Arab broadcasters. Just as the boundaries between print, broadcast and New Media were blurring, so, too, were the ideological boundaries collapsing. Nasser’s Arab nationalists and their Islamist rivals had, for the moment, morphed into a new Arabism, and the media was at their vanguard.

R5 CONCLUSION: Aside from a few specific questions directly related to the role of religion in society, there is no significant difference between self-described “religious” journalists and those professing a more secular outlook. The clear implication is that the barriers between these two worldviews are breaking down within the Arab newsroom.

R5 IMPLICATIONS: Together, these responses demonstrate that no matter their self-declared religiosity, Muslim Arab journalists share a broadly similar view on the critical political and social issues facing Arab society. Even on

specific questions of religion and society, the similarities of their views are more striking than the areas of divergence. Most notable is the fact that about half the self-declared "religious" Muslim journalists gave priority to fostering Arab culture, defending Arab interests, and enhancing pan-Arab unity, while almost as many "secular" Muslim journalists listed defense of spiritual values as a key mission of Arab journalism.

Here we see empirical evidence of the blurring boundaries between "Muslim" issues – traditionally important to political Islamists – and "Arab" issues, traditionally the purview of the Arab nationalists; a manifestation of Smith's "concentric circles of allegiance." It can further be argued that it is also evidence of the "alignment" of "religious imaginings" and nationalist interests posited by Anderson, and the role that religious mythologies play in serving as "guarantor" of national identity, as surmised by Smith.

The results are in line with the findings of recent studies that have reported a weak relationship between religiosity and social and political preferences in Muslim-majority countries,¹¹⁶⁷ and they provide evidence that the ideas of Mandaville's pan-Islamism are taking root in the Arab newsroom as well as the public-at-large.

CHAPTER XIII: SIGNIFICANCE, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

People are enemies of what they ignore.

IMAM ALI¹¹⁶⁸

1) SIGNIFICANCE

The survey presented in these pages is the first large-scale sampling of the demographics, values and attitudes of Arab journalists. It will have significance to researchers in a variety of fields, including Islamic studies, international relations and media studies. Given that approximately 90 percent of Arab journalists are Muslim and that their work has had tremendous influence on attitudes between the Muslim world and the West in the post-9/11 era, a study of Arab journalists, with an emphasis on the degree to which religious identity shapes their worldviews and reporting, can play an important role in providing empirical data to puncture stereotypes and better understand the real nexus between religion and political and social attitudes in a professional population that exerts tremendous influence over public attitudes in the Muslim world. Such a study underlines the relevance of Islamic studies to modern policymakers. Likewise, insights into the worldview of Arab journalists and a better understanding of how they see their mission will enable international relations scholars and Western policymakers to develop knowledge-based policies to build an effective relationship with the Arab media. For media studies, it offers insight into the current state of development of Arab journalism and how the values and mores of Arab reporters and editors conform and contrast with those of journalists elsewhere in the world, enhancing the understanding of how media evolves. The survey will also provide an important benchmark for future studies.

2) LIMITATIONS

By its very nature, this study is constrained by certain limitations. These include:

- The online infrastructure prevented in the inclusion of open-ended questions, which may well have expanded the list of perceived roles and possibly raised important new roles the researchers did not anticipate;
- By listing the lowest salary range as \$100-\$250, the researchers failed to take into account the fact that some journalists are making even lower salaries, as evident from the hand-written answers on some of the paper-and-pencil surveys. Knowing what percentage of respondents were earning less than \$100 might have been useful to others using the dataset.
- The inherent limitation of conducting a survey in authoritarian societies. The confiscation of 20 completed surveys at a policy checkpoint in Syria and the inability of associates to distribute hard-copy surveys in Bahrain, Yemen and several North African countries is only the most apparent indication of the impact on the results. It is impossible to know how many potential respondents opted not to participate in either the printed or online versions of the survey because of fear of retribution from authorities or their bosses.
- The fact that the survey was directed by US researchers affiliated with American institutions is also likely to have had an impact on participation. As noted earlier, some potential participants indicated suspicion that the survey might have the work of US – or Saudi – intelligence agencies.
- Limitations caused by the inclusion of questions considered sensitive or those which asked about attitudes toward political issues. A survey asking only basic demographic questions and questions about journalistic issues may well have elicited higher participation, but it would, of course, not have yielded the kinds of insights obtained.
- How an individual defines himself may sometimes be at odds with the reality of who s/he is. The initial draft of the survey contained a number of questions designed as markers of religiosity, drawn largely from other comparative studies.

Some of these prompted the negative reaction mentioned above. One participant in the beta objected to question about Bush and bin Laden, whether he drank wine, whether he regularly attended mosque and even whether he was a Muslim. As a result, most of those questions were eliminated in the interests of eliciting participation.

- As a result of all of the above, it was impossible to obtain a purely random sample. There is little doubt that a certain level of self-selection was involved, given that those who found some of the questions offensive or were suspicious about the motive of the survey opted out. These are likely to have been individuals with a stronger anti-US viewpoint, and possibly a more conservative religious outlook.
- Other sampling issues: The viral nature of the online survey means that it cannot be ruled out that some journalists working for other than the target media, including Arabs working for overtly Islamist outlets, completed the survey. In addition, those taking the hand-copy survey were able to scan its full content and refuse to participate if they saw something to which they objected, rather than completing questions to that point and then dropping out. This undoubtedly led to a higher percentage of incomplete surveys.

3) FURTHER STUDY

This survey provided the first broad snapshot of Arab media. It will serve as a benchmark for future researchers. It would be useful for a purely Arab team to repeat the exercise to assess whether the nationality of the survey researchers affected the results. Likewise, a version of the survey that does not contain political questions may well produce a richer data set on questions of journalist values and mores. It would also be useful to repeat the survey among avowedly Islamist media to allow comparison. Finally, the survey should be repeated in other non-Arab Muslim countries.

CHAPTER XIV: CONCLUSIONS

Technology has an inherent "bias," for it can never be neutral or independent of society's broader social and political biases. At the same time, however, its potency makes it invariably the site and stake of struggle, the outcome of which is never preordained.

ANDREW GILLESPIE AND KEVIN ROBINS
*JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION*¹¹⁶⁹

Writing of two Palestinian notables prominent in the early twentieth century, Rashid Khalidi observed that they embodied a variety of loyalties:

Among these allegiances were Islamic solidarity, Arabism, Palestinian patriotism, opposition to Zionism, party political affiliation, local Jerusalem loyalties, and family linkages, as well as a commitment to liberal constitutionalism, administrative reform of the state apparatus, and the spread of learning.¹¹⁷⁰

That synergy of interests between proponents of Arab nationalism, nation-state nationalism, Arabism and Islamism is echoed today in the attitudes of Arab journalists. The relatively small differences in responses among self-declared "religious," "secular" and undeclared journalists to issues ranging from their shared commitment to political and social reform to their cynicism about the role of clerics in modern society, thus bolstering the core contention of this dissertation: that Arab journalists are at the forefront of a cyclical convergence of interests between Arab nationalism, nation-state nationalism and Islamism.

Gellner's theory of nationalism as a "sentiment" sparked by "the feeling of anger aroused by the violation of principle, or the feeling of satisfaction aroused by its fulfillment" can be seen reflected in answers to many of the survey questions. Anger at US policy, frustration with the region's totalitarian elites, disillusionment with the clergy, disenchantment with the plight of the poor and disenfranchised – these and other responses are empirical evidence of the existence of AbuKhalil's *wihdat hal* (unity of situation),

providing validity to the argument made by Eickelman and Piscatori that there exists an “implicit consciousness of common notions” among Arabs of all political and religious stripes that “becomes apparent when the shared assumptions are violated or attacked.”¹¹⁷¹

That shared agenda among those defining themselves as “Islamists” and the rest of the sample also provides credibility to the theory propounded by Mandaville that the world has entered a period of “post-Islamism,” in which “Muslim political identities are oriented primarily toward national or even local concerns,” the Islamist “project” is increasingly secular, and Muslim politics are being reconstituted “in forms more suited to a globalized world.”¹¹⁷² The agenda of these “new Islamists,” he tells us, focuses on “progress and social justice,” themes in synch with those of many other Arabs who seek political change and social justice – including journalists questioned in the survey.

Whether the label is Rinnawi’s “McArabism” or Telhami’s “New Arabism,” the data argues for the emergence of a Rawlian “overlapping consensus”¹¹⁷³ among the various streams of political thought in the Arab world today, a “new” Arabism borne of a new electronic regional public sphere. As Marc Lynch explains:

What makes this new Arab public “new” is the omnipresent political talk shows, which transform the satellite television stations into a genuinely unprecedented carrier of public argument. What makes it “Arab” is a shared collective identity through which speakers and listeners conceive of themselves as participating in a single, common political project. What makes it a “public sphere” is the existence of contentious debates, carried out by and before this self-defined public, oriented toward defining these shared interests.¹¹⁷⁴

Equally, it demonstrates that Arab journalists have also come full circle. What they see as the mission of Arab journalism closely tracks the cause-based approach documented by McFadden in the early 1950s, a relatively *laissez-faire* media era, before the advent of draconian government control that have lasted almost a half century.¹¹⁷⁵ The fight *against* imperialism and Zionism, and government corruption; the fight *for* Arab unity, and the

effort to drive the reform, modernization and democratization of Arab society can all be seen in the survey responses.

Just as Habermas saw “the informal circuit of public communication” serving as a fundamental building block for the emergence of a new European identity,¹¹⁷⁶ so, too, are changes in the patterns and structures of Arab media having an impact on self-identity in the Arab newsroom, creating, in Anthony Smith’s lexicon, journalistic “border guards” who provide the “symbols and myths, memories and values” that reinforce the “cultural profile and historic identity” of the Arab people “through opposition to culturally different neighbours and enemies.”¹¹⁷⁷ That unification in the face of the Other is seen both in attitudes toward US policy and in the set of roles I identified as falling with the Guardian typology, just as it can be seen on the region’s television screens and in its newspapers on an almost daily basis. However, in this case, the “language of self-defense” that Anderson tells us frequently mobilizes popular nationalism, also takes the form of opposition to the autocratic leaders of the Arab world, as seen in the journalists’ commitment to political and social change.

For someone familiar with the revolution in the Arab media, it is hard to read Anderson’s descriptions of the role of print media in rise of eighteenth century nationalism without mentally substituting “Arab television” and considering the equivalent twenty-first century effect. The 20-million books printed by the year 1500 helped spark “a colossal religious propaganda war ... a titanic ‘battle for men’s minds;’”¹¹⁷⁸ while today, more than 370 Arabic language satellite channels reach tens of millions of viewers even as the West and the Islamic world are engaged in a global “war of ideas.” In 1535, a worried François I banned the printing of any book in his realm, a move doomed by the fact that books were being published in the states all around him; today, Arab governments fight a losing battle to stem the tide of information pouring into their countries through trans-border television, the Internet and a host of new media. Print-capitalism created “languages-of-power,” just as Arab satellite television is today institutionalizing an evolving and unifying form of spoken Arabic; and where the French and American revolutions were “shaped by millions of printed words into a ‘concept’ on the printed page, and, in due course, into a model,”¹¹⁷⁹ satellite television journalists and their counterparts in the region’s terrestrial media are

today fueling opposition movements such as Egypt's Kifaya and inspiring made-for-television events like Lebanon's "Cedar revolution."

If, as Anderson believes, "[p]rint-language is what invent[ed] nationalism"¹¹⁸⁰ in eighteenth century Europe, is it any wonder that "Arabic satellite television stations are causing a cataclysmic change in Arabic language patterns and cultural representation"?¹¹⁸¹ And if, as he contends, print-capitalism fed the imagined communities of the nation-state, is it much of a leap to expect that regional broadcast-capitalism would feed some form of regional imagined community in the Arab world? As Anderson put it in 1983, just three years after the launch of CNN and almost a decade before the first Arab satellite channel, "we are simply at the point where communities of the type 'horizontal-secular, traverse-time' become possible."¹¹⁸²

There is another parallel to the early spread of Arab nationalist thought. As the press became a political force in the late nineteenth century, "all contenders of power tried to befriend, control, or liquidate" offending journalists.¹¹⁸³ With the modern Arab media revolution, history is, unfortunately, repeating itself.

As Shoemaker and Reese's model tells us, an array of pressures shape the output of Arab news organizations. Depending on where they operate and for whom they work, the political economy of the Arab media means that virtually all Arab journalists operate under some degree of overt censorship, psychological pressure, threat of physical violence, and/or corporate strictures. That was evident in the debate over Darfur. Others face more basic challenges, like poor salaries and a lack of professional training. As Sakr points out, at the end of the day, "Journalists are not independent professionals, but employees."¹¹⁸⁴ Make no mistake, the ownership of the pan-Arab television channels – if not the journalists themselves – have a financial/professional stake in fostering a pan-Arab perspective *but* those same owners also answer to more domestic imperatives, be they Saudi, Qatari, Egyptian or Lebanese and, equally important, the majority of the respondents *did not* come from the pan-Arab media.¹¹⁸⁵

The data shows that pan-Arab and "domestic" journalists alike share a set of aspirations for their profession, whether or not they are able to achieve those in the context

of their current employment and whether or not those aspirations are in synch with those of their owners. On an elite level, their ability to adjust to circumstance can be seen in the game of musical chairs that is ongoing among top editors and on-air personalities at the leading Arabic language satellite channels, Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, BBC Arabic and LBC. Objectivity may be “contextual,” but aspirations are not.

The survey results also validate Shoemaker and Reese’s contention that journalists make no pretense to objectivity when there is broad societal agreement on an issue, in this case US policy in the Middle East, and that how they perceive their role – in this case as agents of social and political change – affects how they cover the news. Hanitzsch’s view that the professional and moral values of journalists are “inevitably culture-bound” is borne out in responses to questions about the professional values and mores of journalism, in which the Arab respondents reject many of the Western benchmark measures of journalistic “fairness” and responsibility in favor of their own activist approach. So, too, do they validate his contention that nations in transition are likely to have a “politically active” journalism that takes an “interventionist” approach in which journalists “participate, intervene, get involved, and promote change.”¹¹⁸⁶

The satellites that transmit pan-Arab television do not recognize the lines in the sand imposed by colonial powers, and, in some – but certainly not all – senses, those lines are also being erased in the imagination of the Arab people. Nowhere are those distinctions becoming more blurred than in the newsrooms of the pan-Arab channels, where Egyptians and Syrians, Yemenis and Moroccans, Christians and Muslims, Sunnis and Shi’ites, and, of course, nationalists and Islamists cooperate to create the news. Crowded together with the journalists in the Arab newsroom are all the things that Shoemaker, Reese and Hanitzsch tell us affect what ultimately appears on the television screen: Attitudes shaped by upbringing, education, politics, culture, and religion; the supposedly “universal” mores of journalism emerging from the West; pressures from governments, owners, and, in some cases, the forces of violence intent on harming journalists. That their news organizations exist beyond borders gives them the distance from power that the theories tell us provides them with a degree of freedom, while journalists closer to the center of power – on domestic media in places like Syria, Egypt and Yemen – find themselves in jail or worse for reporting the same

story in the same way. All are the product of the hierarchy of influences at work in their newsroom, which determines whether they are censored, self-censor or tell it like it is.

Therein lay one of the oversights of the Shoemaker and Reese model. As noted above, there is no 'one size fits all' theory that fits any situation. Shoemaker and Reese provide us with a structure, but the data would seem to indicate the hierarchy itself may need to be adjusted for the Arab world. Ideology, as Shoemaker and Reese posit, certainly appears to trump all else, but more importance needs to be given to the culture of the newsroom, the state of the society in which the individual journalist operates, and the kinds of stories s/he covers. For this, Hanitzsch's injection of culture into the model is critical.

"Mass media content is a socially created product, not a reflection of an objective reality," according to Shoemaker and Reese. And those social pressures begin where news is produced. The array of nationalities in the newsrooms of pan-Arab satellite channels and newspapers and their decided news emphasis on the regional over the local, the emotional over the mundane, the touchstone "Arab" and "Islamic" issues of the day over "domestic" topics like jobs and sewer lines, combine to enhance the trans-border worldview of the journalists working there. And the reporting of those journalists, in turn, influences journalists working on purely domestic news organizations who admire them for the new style of aggressiveness and professionalism that they have introduced. Ownership, of course, ultimately governs how and what they report, as do government regulations; while the routines of media work and management structure and style all come into play, but, I argue, journalists' role conceptions and their personal attitudes, which are both ranked in the bottom level of the Shoemaker and Reese model, are far more important in the Arab context.

Reese's adaptation of the model to the "global journalist" acknowledges the import of "national context," but here, too, the model fails to overtly take into account two factors I believe are fundamental to understanding the influences that shape how a journalist approaches his/her job. These include:

- 1) Newsroom culture as it is shaped by the background of the journalists who inhabit it and through the way in which they influence *each other*; and,

2) The kinds of stories covered by the news organization for which they work.

Exposure to the perspective of colleagues from two dozen different countries and a focus on critical regional issues inevitably alters their worldview; through daily reporting of dramatic life-and-death issues of war, terrorism and societal unrest, all taking place on Arab soil and spilling Arab blood or impinging on the rights and freedoms of the Arab people, whether at the hand of a foreign Other or their own governments, just as inevitably produces the kind of “rally-round-the-flag” effect¹¹⁸⁷ that leaves them with a politically-charged, activist outlook. Such an impact must be factored in.

These observations are not meant to obviate the value of the Shoemaker and Reese model, but they are a reminder of Hanitzsch’s observation that there exists “a universe of diverse and coexisting worlds of journalism,” and thus the relative import of the model’s constituent parts will inevitably vary according to cultural context.¹¹⁸⁸ Arab journalists report for news organizations in a region that is, from their perspective, constantly under siege. From covering the conflicts in Iraq, Lebanon and the Occupied Territories to reporting about the ongoing struggle for political reform across the region, Arab journalists are being challenged on a daily basis to define their role. Are they “objective” journalists or defenders of the Arab nation; “unbiased observers” or agents of political and social change? Activist journalism is what fueled America’s drive to independence, with reporters and editors serving as Hobsbawm’s “engineers” of the new national identity. A parallel can be drawn to the role of Arab journalists today.

Underpinning Arab society, according to Abu-Rabi, are “a constellation of competing ideologies.” The sum of these forces, he says, “is different from one Arab country to another and might also be different over time.”¹¹⁸⁹ The same can be said of the political winds within Arab newsrooms from Casablanca to Sana’a. The hierarchy-of-influences in no two news organizations is precisely alike, just as the self-view of no two journalists is precisely the same.

Arab journalists are today entering a new era. They are striving for new levels of professionalism even as the very mission of Arab journalism shifts from that of bulwark of the status quo to agents of political and social change. In this, they hark back to the writers

of the great Arab Awakening (*Nahda*) of the 19th and early 20th centuries, who forged a tradition in which journalists acted as “witness and militant for change at the same time” and whose mission was “the struggle against dictatorship and for democracy.”¹¹⁹⁰

The data above indicates that the historically secular, Arab nationalist orientation of Arab journalists has given way to a worldview that combines a heightened sense of Muslim identity with a position at the forefront of the “new Arabism” – in which Arab and Muslim goals coincide – that has grown increasingly prominent in the region since 9/11. This new worldview was summed up by Al-Jazeera anchor Muhammed Krichen. Standing in the channel’s newsroom one afternoon as he was about to go on the air, I asked this Algerian national to define himself. He did not hesitate: “I am an Arab, Muslim journalist,” he proudly replied. That multi-faceted identity is shared by countless reporters and editors in newsrooms across the Arab world. It is an identity unique to this particular time in the development of Arab journalism and this moment in the political and social evolution of the Arab world.

Are Arab journalists anti-American, as some in Washington have charged? The data does not seem to support that view. Do they adhere to the same sense of mission as their American counterparts? No, they do not, that is also clear. Throughout history, media and politics have been partners in change, sometimes warring, sometimes cooperating. The American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Bolshevik Revolution, the *Nahda*, in these and countless other upheavals, journalists sought to drive change. Pretensions of “objectivity” would come later; at such times, journalism was a means to an end and its mission was to upend the status quo.

Far from aspiring to be clones of their American colleagues, Arab journalists are seeking to forge their own identity. As Abdulwahab Badrakhan, then of *Al-Hayat* told me, the primary role of Arab journalists today is “to work to identify *what is* an Arab journalist.”¹¹⁹¹ Arab journalists are not, for the most part, fiery revolutionaries. But their responses indicate that they are committed to slow, steady political and social change. Achieving that – while at the same time safeguarding the region’s people, religion and values – is, at this point in history, the overriding mission of Arab journalism, with an

emphasis on the word “Arab,” for as Al-Jazeera’s Ahmed Sheikh told me, “We belong to this Arab nation and we are there to cover from our own perspective.”¹¹⁹²

Meanwhile, after a historic cycle spanning the twentieth century, during which Arab nationalism transitioned through Ba’athism and Arab Socialism, Syrian Nationalism and Nasser’s Arabism, at the dawn of the new century Arab nationalism has now returned to a form in which causes and shared ethnic, linguistic and cultural norms serve as an overlay on a regional map depicting nation-states that few would readily see erased. The realities of modern Arab politics, now as then, mean that the Arab League often cannot even muster a quorum for a ministerial meeting, much less reach agreement on mildly controversial issues of regional and international policy. A “pan-Arab” nation in which Gulf royals, secular autocrats and Lebanese jointly rule is almost beyond imagination. Yet satellite television and new media means that those disparate nations and groups are also bound together in a new Arab consciousness mediated by the constant mutual exposure to the very external threats that lay at the core of earlier waves of pan-Arab impulses.

“At moments of intense collective crisis, this notion of common membership can expand dramatically, almost overnight, and erase or subordinate differences between members of a single national community,” Middle East historian Michael Provence has written. “The Syrian revolt of 1925 was such a moment of crisis.”¹¹⁹³ In many ways, this, too, is such a moment.

The “illusion of relative homogeneity against the hegemonic foreigner” that Cole and Kandiyoti say contributes to “incipient ‘national’ cohesion” is readily apparent on the TV screens each day.¹¹⁹⁴ Their use of quotation marks around the word “national” to emphasize it as a *relative* term underscores its applicability in the pan-Arab context, for the new Arabism of the twenty-first century is not the Arab nationalism of a half-century ago. Like communism, the purist ideas of its early Arab nationalist ideologues were corrupted by opportunistic politicians and bled dry in the prisons of the authoritarian regimes they spawned. Today’s new Arabism is an idea shorn of its Socialist Utopian pretensions, representing not a monochromatic political ideology, but a philosophy – a way of seeing the world – that at once lives within and transcends political boundaries, bringing under its wings Arabs from the slums of Beirut and the palaces of the Gulf who “share common

sentiments"¹¹⁹⁵ about Palestine, foreign hegemony and the plight of the Arabs and Muslims; are part of a common "cultural and linguistic heritage"¹¹⁹⁶ of which Islam forms an essential base; and, whether secularists or devout Muslims, are united by a sense of despair, frustration and anger – *widhat al-masa'ib*, the "unity of disasters."¹¹⁹⁷

At the same time, many Arab intellectuals are engaged in a reassessment; a search for a new definition of the Arab-Islamic cultural heritage. Arabs are anything but united on the form that will take. "What constitutes the Arab-Islamic heritage and who is to define it remain the most pressing and controversial issue[s] facing the Arab-Muslim societies," according to Fauzi Najjar.¹¹⁹⁸

Not surprisingly, these debates stretch beyond Islam itself into Arab politics. "We need a reformulation of the idea of Arabism," Lebanese writer Elias Khouri told a crowd at a Beirut coffee house who had gathered to discuss the late Samir Kassir's book, *Being Arab*, in the spring of 2007, as Lebanon itself struggled to find a new national identity.¹¹⁹⁹ The "fragmentation" of the Arab identity was evident in both the nightly car bombs that sent the Beirut coffee house crowd scurrying home early and in the civil war between Sunnis and Shi'ites a thousand miles away in Iraq, with its regional reverberations. It all meant, journalist Rami Khouri told the same audience, that while "the spirit of being an Arab is very real," the issues of identity, the norms of governance and the values of society that are the foundations of a true sense of *being* remained elusive and ill-defined. "We face the question of how do we construct a new national myth that grabs people," Khouri said.

Indeed, the chasms in the Arab world – between the haves and the have-nots, between the nationalists and the pan-Arabists, the secular elite and the Islamists, between each of the tribes with flags – run deep. Egyptians use the word "Arab" disparagingly to describe the rich Gulf Arabs who crowd Cairo's hotels and nightclubs to escape the summer heat and/or cultural rigors of Ramadan – the so-called "Saudi season" – each year, the resentment encapsulated in the lyrics of a popular Egyptian song: "Our daughters prostitute themselves in the Mercedes of filthy rich Saudis."¹²⁰⁰ For North African scholar Muhammad Abid al-Jabiri, a critic of the influence of Bedouin history on Arab-Muslim identity, the goal of this reassessment is

to articulate the components of Arab-Islamic culture and to examine them critically, seeking to reconstruct the Arab self on new bases, free from the negative paradigms of the past...¹²⁰¹

In an earlier age, Sayyid Qutb wrote that “the idea of homeland (*watan*) [is] an idea in the consciousness (*fikrah fi al-shu’ur*), not a piece of land.”¹²⁰² Few today seriously speak of regional *political* unity or a realignment of borders, much less suggest that national identifications be shed. What Abukhalil calls the “dreamy” nationalism of Michel Aflaq has been abandoned. In its place is a new, many-faceted “Arab self;”¹²⁰³ still uncertain, still taking form, but one which unites Arabs in, if not in a common ideology, then a broad shared worldview that can be glimpsed anywhere within the “finite, if elastic boundaries”¹²⁰⁴ of the Arab world. “The progress of national consciousness,” Hobsbawm wrote, “is neither linear nor necessarily at the expense of other elements of social consciousness.”¹²⁰⁵

Political economists Richards and Waterbury perhaps summed it up best, observing that, “Like the unicorn, the status quo in the Middle East is a figment of fertile imaginations.”¹²⁰⁶

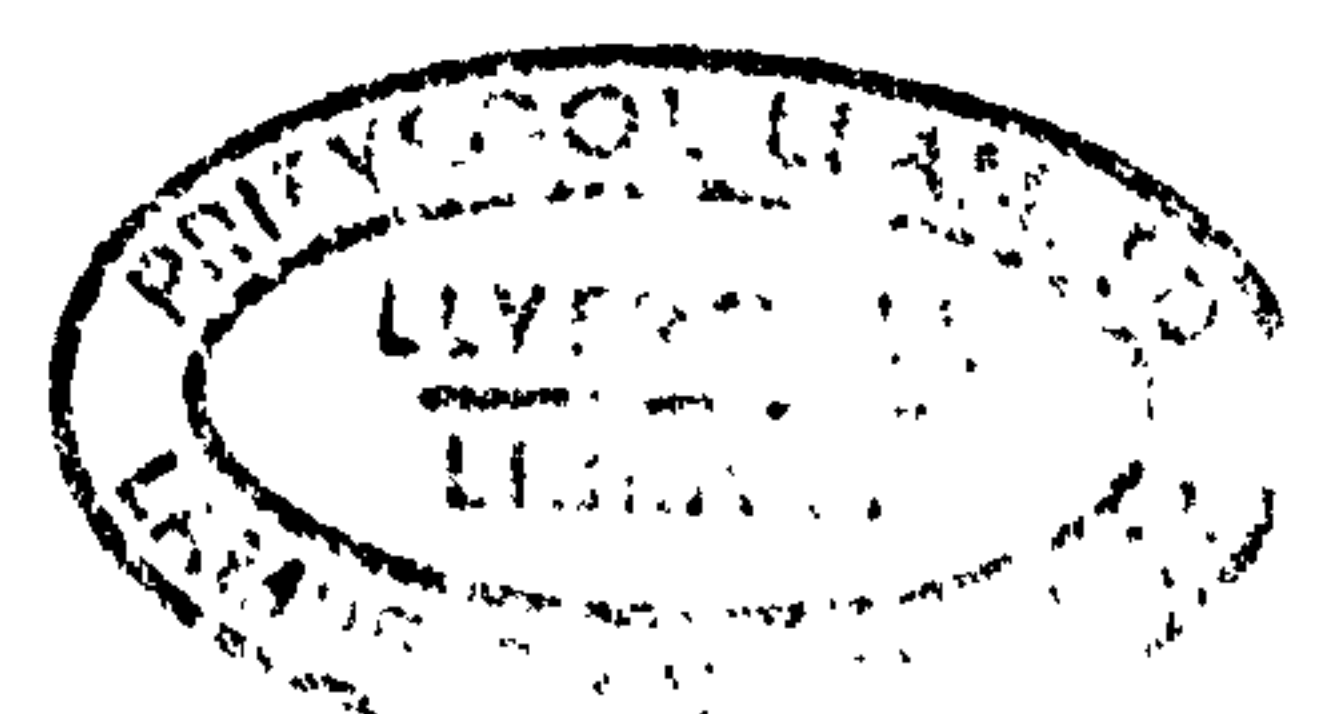
As noted in the introduction, it was the central thesis of this study that Arab journalists at the dawn of the twenty-first century embody a worldview that combines pan-Arabism – stripped of the Utopian garb of Arab nationalism – with a heightened sense of Muslim identity. The quantitative and qualitative data bears that out. Further, it was the author’s contention that while Arab journalists share with colleagues around the world a basic set of normative professional values, such norms quickly fall away in the face of empirical challenges to their core identity of religion, nationality, and ethnicity. This hypothesis, too, is supported by the data. These twin realities have important implications for the peoples of the region in which they report.

In the early 1980s, describing the rise of nationalism in Latin America, Benedict Anderson wrote, adding his own emphasis, “[N]either economic interest, Liberalism, nor Enlightenment could, or did, create *in themselves* the *kind*, or shape, of imagined community.

... In accomplishing *this* specific task, pilgrim creole functionaries and provincial creole printmen played the decisive historic role."¹²⁰⁷

Like those provincial creole "printmen," Arab journalists, are today playing *their* part in creating the new Arab imagined community; for it is *their* identity and worldview that is echoed in, and reinforced by, newspapers, radio stations and television channels across the Arab world every day, as they write the narrative of a tumultuous and intensely complex new chapter in the evolution of Arab consciousness.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ENGLISH VERSION OF SURVEY

This survey is being conducted by the Adham Center for Electronic Journalism at The American University in Cairo, in association with the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. It is an attempt to paint a true portrait of journalists in the Middle East and North Africa at this important time of change, both to dispel myths and to serve as a benchmark to follow the ongoing evolution of journalism in the region.

The model for this survey is the annual "State of the News Media" report on US journalism published by the Project for Excellent in Journalism (www.journalism.org). Numerous media organizations have agreed to cooperate, including *al-Hayat*, *Asharq Alawsat*, *al-Arabiya*, *al-Jazeera*, the Washington Arab Journalists Association, and others. Financial support comes from the Rockefeller Brothers Foundation, the Howard R. Marsh Foundation and the US Indonesia Society. There is no financial or other connection with any government.

This survey consists of approximately 50 questions. It is completely confidential. Whether you are completing the online or paper version, there is no way for anyone to identify you. We do not ask for your name, contact information, or even what media outlet you represent. If there is a question that makes you uncomfortable, feel free to skip it and move on to the next question.

And please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Pintak
Director, Adham Center for Electronic Journalism
Publisher and senior editor, Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies
The American University in Cairo
lpintak@aucegypt.edu

A. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

- 1) Type of news organization
 - a) Daily newspaper
 - b) Weekly newspaper
 - c) Magazine
 - d) English-language newspaper
 - e) Private TV station
 - f) Government TV station
 - g) Radio station

- 2) What is the ownership of your news organization?
 - a) Government
 - b) Private corporation
 - c) Political party
 - d) Individual

e) Other

3) What is your job description?

- a) Reporter
- b) Assistant-editor/Producer
- c) Editor
- d) TV presenter
- e) Non-editorial

4) Are you:

- a) full-time
- b) freelance
- c) Work for more than one media outlet

5) Where are you based?

- a) Middle East
- b) South Asia
- c) Southeast Asia
- d) Europe
- e) US

6) How long have you worked in journalism?

- a) Less than 1 year
- b) 1 to 2 years
- c) 3 to 5 years
- d) 5 to 10 years
- e) More than 10 years

7) What is the highest grade of school or level of education you have completed?

- a) Primary
- b) Secondary
- c) Some university
- d) Bachelors degree
- e) Masters degree
- f) Doctorate

8) If you attended college, did you take courses in journalism or media studies?

- a) Yes
- b) No

9) Prior to being hired as a reporter, how much journalistic training did you have?

- a) None
- b) Less than 1 year
- c) 1 to 2 years
- d) Journalism degree

10) Marital status

- a) Married
- b) Single

- d) Muslim world
- e) Don't know

B. JOURNALISM

19) Please indicate how significant you think the following challenges are to Arab journalism.

a) Government control

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

b) Corporate pressures

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

c) Pressure from religious groups

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

d) The threat of physical violence

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

e) Lack of professionalism

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

f) Threats from the US

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

g) Corruption among journalists

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

h) Lack of ethics

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

i) Media ownership

1	2	3	4
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Most significant

20) Complete the following sentence, "It is the job of a journalist to..."

a) Encourage political reform

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

b) Entertain the public

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

c) Use news for the social good

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

d) Serve as voice for the poor

1	2	3	4	9
Completely	Somewhat	Somewhat	Completely	Don't know

disagree	disagree	agree	agree	
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e) Educate the public

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

f) Support government policy

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

g) Investigate government claims

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

h) Simply report what happens

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

i) Support national/regional development

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

j) Be an adversary to government

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

k) Defend Arab interests

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

l) Encourage spiritual values

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

m) Represent the interests of his/her employer

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

n) Foster Arab culture

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

o) Transform society

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

p) Analyze complex issues

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

q) Encourage civic engagement

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

r) Protect Islamic traditions

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

s) Lead political change

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

t) Enhance pan-Arab unity

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

u) Support the Palestinian cause

1	2	3	4	9
Completely Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Completely agree	Don't know

21) How significant has been the impact of satellite television on Arab journalism?

1	2	3	4	9
Completely insignificant	Somewhat insignificant	Somewhat significant	Very significant	Don't know

22) Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements

a) A journalist must always be objective

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) A journalist should interpret events for the reader/viewer

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

c) A journalist should include his/her own opinion in stories

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

d) A journalist may actively engage in political activities

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

e) A journalist may take part in protest demonstrations

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

23) To what extent do you agree/disagree with the following?

a) My news organization is doing an outstanding job of informing the public

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) The Arab media is becoming freer

1	2	3	4
Completely	Somewhat	Partly agree	Completely

disagree	disagree		agree
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c) As a journalist, I personally feel freer to do my job

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

d) US media coverage of post-9/11 US foreign policy has been very objective

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

e) Arab media coverage of post-9/11 US foreign policy has been very objective

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

24) Please indicate how well you think the media is doing in the following areas:

a) Arab media: Fairness

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

b) US media: Fairness

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

c) European media: Fairness

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

d) Arab media: Independence

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

e) US media: Independence

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

f) European media: Independence

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

g) Arab media: Professionalism

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

h) US media: Professionalism

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

i) European media: Professionalism

1	2	3	4	9
Poor	Moderate	Good	Very good	Don't know

25) How do you feel about the following statement? "Journalists must balance the need to inform the public with the responsibility to show respect."

1	2	3	4	9
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree	Don't know

26) Please indicate whether you agree or disagree about the following statements about journalistic practices:

a) It is acceptable to take money to write favorable stories.

1	2	3
Never	Sometimes	Always

b) It is acceptable to take travel money from people or organizations that are subjects of stories.

1	2	3
Never	Sometimes	Always

c) It is acceptable to write positive stories in return for advertising.

1	2	3
Never	Sometimes	Always

C. INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

27) Please indicate how important you think the following issues are to the Arab world:

a) The economy

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

b) Political reform

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

c) Human rights

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

d) Health

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

e) Iraq

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

f) Palestine

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

g) Terrorism

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

h) Environment

1	2	3	4	9
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Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important
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i) Education

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

j) Poverty

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

k) Globalization

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

l) Other

1	2	3	4	9
Not important	Somewhat important	Important	Very important	The most important

- 28) What is the greatest threat facing the Arab world today?
- a) Economy
 - b) US policy
 - c) Terrorism
 - d) Political instability
 - e) Lack of political change

- f) Human rights abuses
- g) Globalization
- h) None of the above

29) Please indicate your response to the following statements:

a) My attitude toward the US is:

1	2	3	4
Very unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very favorable

b) My attitude toward the American people is:

1	2	3	4
Very unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very favorable

c) My attitude toward US policies is:

1	2	3	4
Very unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Somewhat unfavorable	Very favorable

30) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a) The US plays a positive role in the Middle East

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) The US plays a negative role in the Middle East

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

31) After the 2004 Tsunami that struck Southeast and South Asia and the 2005 earthquake hit Kashmir, the US responded by giving economic aid. Do you recall media coverage of US aid?

- a) Yes
- b) No

32) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a) The US gave aid because of a sincere desire to help the people of those regions

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) The US aid was an attempt to generate Muslim support

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

c) Whatever the motivation, US aid to the disaster victims was a noble and good thing

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

33) In many speeches since 9-11, President Bush has declared that US supports the spread of freedom and democracy throughout the Muslim world. Do you recall media coverage of any of these speeches?

- a) Yes
- b) No

34) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a) The US supports the spread of democracy because of a sincere desire to help Muslims

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) The US support for the spread of democracy partly an attempt to demonstrate that the US is not anti-Muslim

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

c) Whatever the motivation, US support for the spread of democracy is a noble and good thing.

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

35) In many speeches since he came to power in the US, President Bush has declared that US supports the creation of a Palestinian State. Do you recall media coverage of any of these speeches?

- a) Yes
- b) No

36) To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

a) The US supports the creation of a Palestinian state because of a sincere desire to help Palestinians

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

b) The US support for a Palestinian state is partly an attempt to demonstrate that the US is not anti-Muslim

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

c) Whatever the motivation, US support for a Palestinian state is a noble and good thing

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

d) The Bush administration is genuine in its expressed desire to create a Palestinian state

1	2	3	4
Completely disagree	Somewhat disagree	Partly agree	Completely agree

D. RELIGION & VALUES

37) If you are Muslim, which best describes you:

- a) Religious Muslim
- b) Secular Muslim
- c) Does not apply

38) Generally speaking, do you think that the religious authorities in the Arab world are giving adequate answers to:

- a) The moral problems and needs of the individual
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know

- b) The problems of family life
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know

- c) Spiritual needs of the people
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know

- d) Social problems facing the nation
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know

39) Which is closer to your own views, even if neither is exactly right?

- a) It IS NOT necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values
- b) It IS necessary to believe in God in order to be moral and have good values
- c) Neither
- d) Don't Know

40) How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements?

	Agree		Neither agree or disagree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	DK
	Strongly	Agree						
		e						
Politicians who do not believe in God are unfit for public office	1	2	3	4	5	9		
Religious leaders should not influence how people vote in elections	1	2	3	4	5	9		
Government should make laws according to the wishes of the people, even if they contradict sharia	1	2	3	4	5	9		

41) Please choose the one which best describes your own opinion.

- a) The way Arab society is organized must be radically changed
- b) Arab society must be gradually improved by reforms
- c) Arab society is not in need of change
- d) Don't know

E. WAR AND TERRORISM

42) In your view, which of the following constitute acts of terrorism?

- a) The US assault on Fallujah
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know
- b) The bombing of the Bali disco
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
- c) The execution of US contractor Nicholas Berg by Arab militants
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
- d) The 2002 Israeli siege of Ramallah
 - i) Yes
 - ii) No
 - iii) Don't know

43) What do you think about the idea that Arab countries have a right to act freely of any Western interference?

- a) Some Western interference is permitted if it leads to important benefits for the people of the country;
- b) It should never be allowed no matter how great the benefits.

44) Please indicate the rough percentage of your countrymen that you believe would agree with the each of the following statements concerning Western interference.

a) We should fight against it only if there is a reasonable likelihood of success.

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

b) We have an obligation to fight it regardless of the costs.

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

45) What do you think about the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes inside Israel?

- a) It can be negotiated for peace if the refugees receive appropriate financial compensation.
- b) It is a right that can never be given up.

46) Please indicate the rough percentage of your countrymen that you believe would agree with the each of the following statements concerning the right of return for Palestinian refugees.

a) We are obligated to fight for this right only if there is a reasonable likelihood of success

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

b) We are obligated to fight anyone who opposes the right of return regardless of the costs.

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

APPENDIX B: ARABIC VERSION OF SURVEY

47) What do you think about the United States occupation of Iraq?

- a) Despite all its problems it can be seen as acceptable if it results in freedom and democracy for Iraqis.
- b) No benefits to Iraqis can justify the occupation.

48) Please indicate the rough percentage of your countrymen that you believe would agree with the each of the following statements concerning the United States occupation of Iraq.

a) We are obligated to fight for the occupation only if the costs are less than the benefits

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

b) We are obligated to fight the occupation regardless of the costs.

- i) 0-10%
- ii) 11-20%
- iii) 21-50%
- iv) 51-75%
- v) More than 75%

END OF SURVEY. THANK YOU. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN FOLLOW-UP SURVEYS, PLEASE EMAIL LAWRENCE PINTAK AT LPINTAK@AUCEGYPT.EDU.

APPENDIX B: ARABIC VERSION OF SURVEY

في الإلكترونيّة للصحافة أدهم مركز الأســتبيان بهذا يقوم البحوث معهد مع بالاشــترك بالقاهرة الأمريكيّة الجامعة صورة لرسم محاولة هو الاســتبيان .ميشيجن بجامعة الاجتماعيّة الفــترة هذه في إفريقيا وشمال الأوسط الشرق في للصحفيين حقيقيّة الحقيقيّة غير الصور إزالة أجل من وذلك التغيّرات من المهمّة .ةالمنطق في الصحافة الحالي التطور لمتابعة معيار وتقــديم

الأمريكيّة الصحافة عن السنوي التقــرير نموذج هو الاســتبيان هذا "الصحفي الامتياز مشروع" عن الصادر و "الاخباري الاعلام حالة" (www.journalism.org) .

ذلك في بما الاســتبيان هذا في التعاون على كــثيرة مؤسسات وافقت لعربيّة / قناة و الجزيرة قناة و الاوسط الشرق و الحياة جريدة مؤسسة تقوم .المؤسسات من وغيرها □/العرب للصحفيين واشــنطن وجمعية الأمريكيّة الجمعية و مارش هورد مؤسسة و روكفلر الاخــوات .المادى بالدعم الاندونيسية

حكومة اي مع نوع اي من حتى او مالية علاقة اي يوجد لا كما

التعرف شخص اي ل يمكن لا بحث سري سؤال 50 عن عبارة الاســتبيان الانترنت على او الورقية النسخة في الاســتبيان اكملت سواء إليك المؤسسة اسم حتى او الشخصية البيانات او الاسم عن نسأل لا نحن تخطيه في تتردد لا مزعج سؤال اي صادفك إذا ..تمثلها التي الصحفي .التالي السؤال إلى

بي الإتصال في تتردد لاف تعليقات أو تساؤلات أي لديك كان إذا

بينتاك لورانس

الإلكترونية للصحافة أدهم مركز مدير

القومية للحدود المتخطية الاذاعية الدراسات مجلة محرر و ناشر

بالقاهرة الأمريكية الجامعة

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A. المعلومات الديموغرافية

1) لمؤسسة الإخبارية نوع 1)

- a) جريدة يومية
- b) جريدة أسبوعية
- c) مجلة
- d) منشور باللغة الانجليزية
- e) قناة تلفزيونية خاصة
- f) حكوميته قناة تلفزيونية
- g) قناة إذاعية

2) ما نوع ملكية مؤسساتك الاخبارية

- a) حكومية
- b) شركة خاصة
- c) حزب سياسي
- d) فرد
- e) آخر

3) ما هو مسماك الوظيفي

- a) مراسل صحفي
- b) مساعد تحرير / منتج تليفزيون
- c) محرر
- d) مقدم تليفزيوني
- e) غير تحريري

4) هل أنت

- a) دوام كامل
- b) صحفي حر
- c) إعلامية مؤسسة من أكثر في تعمل

- 5) أين مقرك
- الشرق الأوسط
 - جنوب آسيا
 - جنوب شرق آسيا
 - أوروبا
 - الولايات المتحدة
- 6) الصحفي العمل في عليك مضي كم
- أقل من سنة
 - من سنة إلى سنتان
 - ثلاث إلى خمس سنوات
 - تخمسة إلى عشرة سنوا
 - أكثر من عشرة سنوات
- 7) عليها حصلت تعليمية درجة أعلى هي ما
- الإعدادية
 - الثانوية
 - جامعية
 - حامل بكالوريوس
 - درجة الماجستير
 - دكتوراه
- 8) أو الصحافة في مواد درست فهل ،الكلية دخلوا ممن كنت إذا
الإعلامية الدراسات
- نعم
 - لا
- 9) صحفي؟ كم اسأل تعمل أن قبل الصحفي التدريب من لديك كان كم
- لا خبرة
 - أقل من سنة
 - من سنة إلى سنتين
 - درجة في الصحافة
- 10) الحالة الاجتماعية
- متزوج
 - عازب
 - مطلق
- 11) الديانة:
- مسلم
 - مسيحي
 - غير

12) الأطفال

- a) 1
- b) 2
- c) 3
- d) 4 أو أكثر
- e) لا يوجد الجنس
- f) ذكر
- g) أنثى

13) في أي عام ولدت؟

14) الدخل الشهري

- a) \$0- 99
- b) \$249-100
- c) 250\$ - 499\$
- d) 500\$ - 999\$
- e) 1000\$ - 1499\$
- f) 1500\$ - 2499\$
- g) 2500\$ - 4999\$
- h) 5000\$ - 7499\$
- i) \$7500+

15) دقة أكثر التالي من واحدة أي رأيك في

- a) الخ اندونيسي / فلسطيني / مصري / أردني أنا شيء كل فوق (الجنسية)
- b) فوق كل شيء أنا مسلم
- c) فوق كل شيء أنا عربي
- d) فوق كل شيء أنا صحفي
- e) شيء آخر

16) سياسيا تتبعها التي للفلسفة وصف افضل هو ما

- a) (الخ ، بحريني ، أردني ، مصري) وطني
- b) وطني عربي
- c) اسلامي
- d) ديمقراطي اصلاحي
- e) لا شيء مما ذكر

17) القول يمكنك التالي المجموعة المجموعات من جغرافية مجموعة أي إلى

الأولئك؟ بالدرجة تنتمي أنك

- a) المنطقة أو المدينة التي تقطنها
- b) الأمة
- c) عربي العالم
- d) العالم الاسلامي
- e) لا أدري

B. الصحافة

على التالية التحديدات أهمية مدى إلى الإشارة برجاء (18)
العربية الصحافة

	مهمة جدا	مهمة نوعا ما	غير مهمة نوعا ما	غير مهمة تماما
السيطرة الحكومية				
ضغوط الشركات				
ضغوط الجماعات الدينية				
تهديدات بالعنف المادي				
انعدام المهنية				
تهديدات الولايات المتحدة				
الفساد بين صحفيين				
انعدام الأخلاقيات				
الملكية الاعلامية				

الأدوار أهمية (19) :كم صحفي إليك بالنسبة التالية

	لا أدري	مهمة جدا	مهمة نوعا ما	غير مهمة نوعا ما	غير مهمة تماما

تشجيع الاصلاح في السياس					
الترفيه عن العامّة					
استخدام الاخبار للمصالح الاجتماعي					
ان يكون صوت الفقراء					
تثقيف العامة					
مساندة السياسة الحكومية					
البحث في الادعائات الحكومية					
مجرد الاخبار بما يحدث					
مساندة التنمية او الوطنية الاقليمية					
معارضة الحكومة					
حماية المصالح العربية					
التشجيع على القيم الروحانية					
تمثيل مصالح صاحب العمل					
تقوية					

TEXT BOUND INTO THE SPINE

دائماً موضوعي				
فسر أن الصحفي على يجب أو للقارئ الاحداث المشاهد				
يشمل أن الصحفي على يجب تقاريره في نظره وجهة				
شارك أن للصحفي يمكن النشاطات في فعليا لسياسية ا				
في يشارك أن للصحفي يمكن الاحتجاجية المظاهرات				

التالي؟ علىترض

غير موافق تماما	غير موافق نوعا ما	موافق جزئيا	موافق تماما	أو توافق مدى أي إلى 22
				تؤدي الإعلامية مؤسستي إخبار في بارزا دورا العامة
				يتجه العربي الاعلام اكثر حرية إلى
				أشعر شخصيا أنا كصحفي أداء في أكثر بحرية عملي
				الإعلامية التغطية للسياسة الأمريكية الأمريكية الخارجية موضوعية كانت 11 / 9 بعد جدا
				الإعلامية التغطية للسياسة العربية الأمريكية الخارجية موضوعية كانت 11 / 9 بعد جدا

في اعتقادك في الاعلام اداء مدى إلى الإشارة برجاء (23)
التاليّة المجالات:

فقير	معقول	جيد	جيد جدا	لا ادري	
					الاعلام العربي: العدل
					الاعلام: الامريكي العدل
					الاعلام: الاوروبيي العدل
					الاعلام العربي: الاسـتقلالية
					الاعلام: الامريكي الاسـتقلالية
					الاعلام: الاوروبيي لية الاسـتقلا
					:الاعلام العربي المهنيّة
					الاعلام: الامريكي المهنيّة
					الاعلام: الاوروبيي المهنيّة

التالية العبارات في رايك ما (24)

اعارض بقوة	اعارض نوعا ما	شبه موافق	موافق تماما	لا ادري	
					ان الصحفيين على يجب لاخبار الحاجة بين يوازنوا إظهار مسؤولي و العامة الاحترام

العبارات على اعتراض ط أو موافقتك مدى إلى الإشارة برجاء (25)
الصحفية الممارسات حول التالية

ابدا	احيانا	دائما	
			من المال تلقي المقيول من شيء لصالح قصص كتابة أجل معين
			من السفر حق تلقي المقيول من القصة محور الشخص
			في قصص كتابة المقيول من الدعاية مقابل

C. الدولية العلاقات

اليوم العربي العالم في التالي القضية القضايا أهمية مدى حدد (26)

غير مهمة	نوعا ما مهمة	مهمة	مهمة جدا	أهم ما يكون	
					الاقتصاد
					الاصلاح السياسي
					حقوق الانسان
					الصحة

العراق					
فلسطين					
الارهاب					
البيئة					
التعليم					
الفقر					
العولمة					
آخر					

اليوم؟ العربي العالم يواجهه تهديد اكبر هو ما (27)

- a) الاقتصاد
- b) السياسة الامريكية
- c) الارهاب
- d) عدم الاسـتقرار السياسي
- e) انعدام التفـكير السياسي
- f) اختراقات حقوق الانسان
- g) العولمة
- h) لا شيء مما ذكر

التالية العبارة ات جاه ات موقفك تحديد د برجاء (28)

غير مؤيد تماما	غير مؤيد نوعا ما	مؤيد نوعا ما	مؤيد تماما	
				موقفي اتجاه الولايات المتحدة هو
				موقفي اتجاه الأمريكان هو
				موقفي اتجاه السياسات

الأمريكية هو				
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التعليقات على تعترض أو توافق مدى أي إلى (29)
التاليّة؟

غير موافق تماما	غير موافق نوعا ما	موافق امانوع	موافق تماما	
				الولايات دور تلعب المتحدة الشرق في إيجابي الأوسط
				الولايات دور تلعب المتحدة الشرق في سلب الأوسط

شرق وجنوب آسيا جنوب ضرب الذي 2004تسببونامي بعد (30)
مساعات باعطاء المتحدة الولايات استجابت آسيا
لمساعات الاعلامية التغطية تذكر هل «اقتصادية
المتحدة؟ الولايات
a) نعم
b) لا

التعليقات على توافق لا أو توافق مدى أي إلى (31)
التاليّة؟

غير موافق تماما	غير موافق نوعا ما	موافق نوعا ما	موافق تماما	
				أعطت المتحدة الولايات نتيجة اقتصادية مساعات مساعدة في صداقة رغبة المنطقة هذه في الناس
				الولايات مساعات محاولة كانت المتحدة إسلامية مساندة لتوليد
				الدافع كان أي الولايات فمساعات

هذه لصحاحيا المتحدة
نيبلا شيئا كان الكارثية
وجيدا

الولايات أن 11 / 9 منذ كتيبة خطابات في بوش أعلن
العالم في والديمقراطية الحرية تساند المتحدة
من لأي الاعلامية التغطية تذكر هل الاسلامية
الخطابات؟ هذه

- a) نعم
b) لا

التعبيرات على قـتـواف لا أو توافق مدى أي إلى
التالية؟

غير موافق تماما	غير موافق نوعا ما	موافق نوعا ما	موافق تماما
الولايات المتحدة الديمقراطية نشر تساند صادقة رغبة لديها لأن المسلمين لمساعدة			
الولايات المتحدة لنشر المتحدة جزئيا هي الديمقراطية أن لإظهار محاولات ليست المتحدة الولايات نالمسلمي ضد			
فإن الدافع كان أي الولايات المتحدة لنشر المتحدة شيء هو الديمقراطية وجيد نبيل			

تولييه منذ كتيبة خطابات في بوش الرئيس أعلن
دولة لإقامة المتحدة الولايات مساندة عن السلطة
هذه من لأي الاعلامية التغطية تذكر هل فلسطينية
الخطابات؟

- a) نعم
b) لا

العبارة على توافق لا أو توافق مدى أي إلى (35) التالية؟

غير موافق تماماً	غير موافق نوعاً ما	موافق نوعاً ما	موافق تماماً
			المتحدة الولايات دولة إقامة تساند واقع من فلسطينية لمساعدة صادقة رغبة الفلسطينيين
			الولايات مساندة دولة لإقامة المتحدة جزئياً هي فلسطينية أن لاطهار أولية مع المتحدة الولايات المسلمين ضد ليست
			الدافع كان أي الولايات فمساندة دولة لإقامة المتحدة نييل شيء هو فلسطينية دوجي
			في صادقة بوش إدارة الظاهرة رغبته دولة لإنشاء فلسطينية

D. القيم والدين

36) بك يليق وصف أفضل هو فما مسلم كنت إذا

- a) لم متدينامس
- b) مسلم علماني
- c) لا يطابقني

37) تعطي العربي العالم في الدينونة السلطات أن تعتقد هل عامة (37)
:للآتي مناسبة إجابات

- a) المشاكل الأخلاقية واحتياجات الفرد
 - (أ) نعم
 - (ب) لا
 - (ت) أدري

- b) مشاكل الحياة العالمية
 - (أ) نعم
 - (ب) لا
 - (ت) أدري

- c) الاحتياجات الروحية للناس
 - (أ) نعم
 - (ب) لا
 - (ت) أدري

- d) أعية التي تواجه الأمة المشاكل الاجتماعية
 - (أ) نعم
 - (ب) لا
 - (ت) أدري

- 38) اي تمام؟ مطابقة تكن لم وإن حتى لأرائك أقرب التالي من
- a) أخلاقيا تكون حتى بالله تؤمن أن الضروري من ليس إنه
حسنة قيم ولديك
 - b) ولديك أخلاقيا تكون حتى بالله تؤمن أن الضروري من إنه
حسنة قيمك
 - c) لا شيء مما ذكر
 - d) أدري

التالي؟ العبارات تعارض أو توافق قدر باي (39)

لا أدري	أعارض بشدة	أعارض	لا أتفق ولا أعارض	أتفق	أتفق بشدة
					السياسيون لا الذين بالله يؤمنون صالحين غير للوطنائف العامّة
					القيادات لا نيّة الـدي تؤثر أن يجب اصوات في في النـساخين الانتخابات
					على يجب أن الحكومة قوانين تشـرع على بناء الشعب آمـال لو حتى مع تعارضت الشريعة

نظرك وجهة يصف ما أفضل اختيار برجاء (40)

- a) راديكالي غير أن يجب العربي المجتمع تنظيم طريقة
- b) طريق عن تدريجيا يحسن أن يجب العربي المجتمع الاصلاحات
- c) للتغيير حاجة أي في ليس العربي المجتمع
- d) لا أدري

عمل يعتبر التالي الافعال من ي أ نظرك في (41)
أرهابي

لا | أدري | لا | نعم |

العسكرية العمليات ضد الأمريكية الفلوجية			
تفجير الملهي في بالي			
المقاول نيكولاس الأمريكي بيرج			
الاسرائيلي الحصار الله ام ر ل 2002 عام			

- تدخل أي بدون التصرف في الحق لهم العرب أن فكرة في رأيك ما (42)
غربي؟
مكاسب إلى سيؤدي كان إذا الأجنبي التدخل بعض يسمح
a) البلد لسكان مهمه
عظيمة المكاسب كانت مهمابه يسمح أن يجب لا b)

- من لذين ا بلدك سكان من التقريبه النسبة إلى الإشارة برجاء (43)
التدخل حول الآتيه العبارات من كل على يوافقوا أن الممكن
الغربي.

أكثر % من 75	%75-51	%50-21	%20-11	%10-0	
					نحاريه أن يجب كان إذا فقط إحتمالية هناك للنجاح جيدة
					تعهد دينال بغض بمحاربتيه الثمن عن النظر

- ديارهم إلى العودة في لفلسطين اللاجئين حق في رأيك ما (44)
إسرائيل؟ داخل
الاجنيون كان إذا السلام أجل من فيه التفاوض يمكن
a) مالية تعويضات سيستلمون
عنه التنازل يمكن لا الذي الحق إنه b)

- الذين بلدك سكان من التقريبه النسبة إلى الإشارة برجاء (45)
الآتيه العبارات من كل على يوافقوا أن الممكن من أنه تعتقد
الفلسطينيين للاجنيون العودة حق حول

	%10-0	%20-11	%50-21	%75-51	أكثر % من 75
مفروض المحاربة علينا الحق هذا أجل من كان إذا فقط احتمالية هناك للتجّاح جيدة					
مفروض نحارب أن علينا حق يعارض أحد أي كان أيّا العبودية التمن					

- 46) للعراق؟ المتحدة الولايات احتلال في رأيك ما
 نتج إذا مقبولاً اعتبره يمكن المشاكل كل من بالرغم
 a) للعراقين الديمقراطية و الحرية عنه
 b) الإحتلال تبرير دورها من للعراقين منافع لا

- 47) الذين بلدك سكان من يبه التقرى النسبة إلى الإشارة برجاء
 الآتية العبارات من كل على يوافقوا أن الممكن من أنه تعتقد
 للعراق المتحدة الولايات احتلال حول

	0-10%	11-20%	21-50%	51-75%	أكثر % من 75
علينا مفروض نحن أجل من نحارب أن فقط الإحتلال التمن كان إذا المكاسب من أقل					
علينا مفروض نحن نحارب أن أيّا الإحتلال التمن كان					

END OF SURVEY. THANK YOU. IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO TAKE PART IN FOLLOW-UP SURVEYS, PLEASE EMAIL LAWRENCE PINTAK AT LPINTAK@AUCEGYPT.EDU.

APPENDIX C: Survey Tools – Pintak
Islam, Nationalism and the Mission of Arab Journalism/pg. 392
SURVEY TOOL EVALUATION MATRIX

	FREE ONLINE	FLASHLIGHT	SURVEY MONKEY	UM LESSONS	SITEMAKER	FILEMAKER
TOOLS	http://freeonline-surveys.com/	http://flashlightonline.wsu.edu/	http://www.surveymonkey.com/	http://lessons.ummuh.umich.edu/2k	http://sitemaker.umich.edu	FileMaker Pro
SAMPLES	http://FreeOnlineSurveys.com/rendersurvey.asp?id=39266	http://CTLSilhouette.wsu.edu/surveys/ZS24048	http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=51861216805	http://lessons.ummuh.umich.edu/2k/ES_Survey/survey_001	http://sitemaker.umich.edu/lrc	http://web.lrc.lsa.umich.edu
FEATURES MAKING: CONTENT						
template	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes table customizable	no
instruction area	Yes, front page and description option	yes	yes	yes, front page and description option	yes, create text field with default value	yes, you create field
text heading; section;	yes, multiple pages possible	yes	yes	yes, , multiple pages possible	yes, side navigation menu	yes, you create field
short answer: line	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
short answer: box					yes	
short answer: multiple boxes	yes	no				yes
multiple choice: one choice	yes	yes, drop down	yes; horiz vert option	yes	yes drop down easy extra step	yes
multiple select: checklist	yes	yes	yes; horiz vert option	yes	yes	
rating scale matrix	yes	Yes, matrix, 7 point max	yes; multi item option; pop up menu option	yes, matrix, 10 point max	no; workarround multiple drop downs	yes, user creates
Built-in "other" option	yes	no	yes with checklist	yes	no; author creates	no; author creates; append value list
other notable features:	FL interfaces	instructional tech question bank	presentation items, randomize, question outline/menu	question clustering	file attachment upload	
date/time stamp	yes, in aggregate analysis	yes, in analysis	yes	yes, in analysis	yes	yes
insert media	yes	? custom html	yes via html	yes	yes	yes
font customization	yes	yes, custom html	yes	no	yes	yes
diacritic friendly (accents)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes
two-byte friendly unicode compliant	yes, but not right-to-left	yes; custom html	?	?	yes	?
copy survey option	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes; clone	yes
user upload file; attachment	no	no	?	no	yes	?
insert html	yes, into fields	yes, into fields; custom html also	yes, into fields	yes, into fields	yes, into fields custom html layout	yes

SURVEY TOOL FEATURE MATRIX – ES2004 SECTION B: ADDITIONAL TOOLS

	ZOOMERANG	QUIA	QUICKBASE	WEB FORM
TOOLS	http://www.zoomerang.com	http://www.quia.com/	http://www.quickbase.com	DreamWeaver Go Live raw html
SAMPLES	http://www.zoomerang.com/survey.cgi?4720VA9MS3A07.html	http://www.quia.com/sv/1737.html	https://www.quickbase.com/db/7yq83fzq?a=v&i=ctct&m=hs4g3	http://www.umich.edu/~phili/raw.html
FEATURES MAKING: CONTENT				
template	yes	yes	yes	no
instruction area	yes	yes	front page	yes; you create field
text heading; section;	yes, headings	no	no	yes; you create field
short answer: line	yes	yes	yes	yes
short answer: box				
multiple choice: one choice	yes; bullets or drop down	yes	yes, drop down	yes
multiple select: checklist	yes; bullets	yes	yes; awkward	yes
rating scale	Yes, matrix, 10 point max	yes	yes, no matrix, individual items, 5 point max	yes; user creates
Built-in "other" option	yes	no	yes; user adds item to list	no; author creates
other notable features:			numeric, numeric rating, phone, email (links), file attachment, url (links),	
date/time stamp	no	yes	yes	yes; via email
insert media	yes, with PRO version	yes, images, html links	No, but could make external link	yes
font customization	no	no	no	yes
diacritic friendly (accents)	yes	yes; palette	yes	yes
two-byte friendly	?	?	?	yes
unicode compliant				
copy survey option	yes	yes	?	yes
user upload file	no	no	yes	yes; if you build it; not export excel
insert html	yes into fields	yes, into fields	yes, into fields	yes, is all html

	FREE ONLINE	FLASHLIGHT	SURVEY MONKEY	UM LESSONS	SITEMAKER	FILEMAKER
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MAKING: LAYOUT

individual page per question	yes	no	Yes	yes	no	no
all questions one page	yes	yes	Yes	yes	yes	yes
mult questions per page	yes	no	Yes	with clustering	no; could use sections	yes
graphic customization	add logo	yes; custom html	pay: add logo, font, bg color	no	yes; custom html layout	yes; full
re-order items	yes	yes; click arrows	Yes	yes	yes	yes
required fill-in	yes option	no	pay yes option	?	? custom?	? probably
reverse and change answer?	?	?	Yes	?	?	?
assumes not one page branching; skip logic, conditional logic	no	no	yes pay; page and choice questions	?	no	yes author builds
maximum number surveys	free 50 pay 1000 active	demo ? pay unlimited	free ? pay unlimited	?	?	n/a
maximum number questions	free 20 pay unlimited	demo ? pay 800 custom 160/scale; 40 radio check and text	free 10 pay unlimited pages, questions	?	30,000 table cell limit including questions and responses	n/a
maximum number responses	free 50 pay 1000 pay + unlimited	demo ? pay unlimited	free 100 pay 1000/month	?	30,000 table cell limit including questions and responses	n/a

TAKING: ACCESS

user access	anonymous, restrict to password via cookies	anonymous by login	anonymous password	anonymous by name kerberos	anonymous? open website by login kerberos	anonymous open website by login
user must register	no	no	No	no	no	no
notify respondents any auto feature?	yes	no auto, send url	yes, email list management	no	in development	no auto, send url
interrupted session (save/import)	no	no	various response options	no	yes, via involved access control	yes, but must be designed
option user view others' records	no	no	yes pay	no	yes	yes
additional author access	yes, via password	yes, via group	?	yes	yes, via access privileges	yes, via access privileges
end survey choose expiration date	yes, via delete or clear results	yes, close button	yes	yes	yes (access privileges)	yes (remove from server)

ZOOMERANG	QUIA	QUICKBASE	WEB FORM
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MAKING: LAYOUT

Individual page per question	no	no	no
all questions one page	yes	yes	yes
mult questions per page	no	no	yes
graphic customization fonts, colors, bg	yes; background themes	no	yes; full
re-order items	yes; click arrows	yes	yes
required fill-in	?	?	validation?
reverse and change answer?	?	?	?
assumes not one page			
branching; skip logic, conditional logic	no	no	yes author builds
maximum number surveys	?	?	n/a
maximum number questions	?	?	n/a
maximum number responses	?	?	n/a

TAKING: ACCESS

user access	anonymous open website email invitation	anonymous open website by login	email invitation	anonymous open website kerberos
user must register	no	no	yes	no
notify respondents any built-in email feature?	yes, email list	?	yes, email invitation	no auto, send url
interrupted session (save/import)	no	no	yes	no
option user view others' records	no	no	yes	no
additional instructor access	?, not in free version	?	yes, paid	yes (via shared files)
end survey choose expiration date	?	no	yes	yes (remove from server)

FREE ONLINE	FLASHLIGHT	SURVEY MONKEY	UM LESSONS	SITEMAKER	FILEMAKER
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ANALYSIS: RESULTS

location results displayed / stored	display webpage; FreeOnlineSurvey storage	display webpage; store Flashlight server	display webpage; store SMonkey server	display webpage; custom display; store Sitemaker server	via website, via database; store in database or via email
export to delimited file: Excel, SPSS	yes	yes	yes pay	yes	yes
record keeping (list respondents) instructor /author	yes	yes if validation required	yes pay; list management	yes	yes
record keeping respondent	yes, if print page	yes if print page	no	yes via involved access	yes
tabulation built-in totals, percents, graphs	yes, totals, percents, graphs	yes, totals and graphs	yes, totals, percents	yes, totals and graphs	no (later in Excel)
sort built-in	yes via filters	no (later in Excel)	free no pay filter	yes; criteria ALSO SEARCH	user, item extensive in-program capability
view individual response	web yes spreadsheet yes	web no spreadsheet yes	yes	yes; view record	yes view record

MAKING: SUPPORT / FEES

help docs	via email with monthly subscription	yes, improved	yes, step by step process	yes	yes, average
support	yes, very intuitive tool	yes, UM and external	yes, external	yes, U-M	yes, UM
learning curve	low	low	low	moderate	high
ease of use	very easy	easy, reorder cumbersome	very easy	easy, pop-ups involved	involved, not template
free	free 10-day demo, buy license	yes to UM free temp demo	yes,	yes to UM others trial period	must have license for host site
rates	\$9.99/month educational user; pay as use needed mega-user license is possible for annual fee	UM subscription (\$2,400) RATES - FREE TEMP DEMO http://www.tltgroup.org/subscriptions/Comp_Coll.htm	\$20/month pay as use	\$5000 plus UM free	license for software, server software
advertising	not yet	no	not yet	no	no

ZOOMERANG QUIA QUICKBASE WEB FORM

ANALYSIS: RESULTS

location results displayed / stored	display webpage; store Zoomerang server 10 days free version	via website, Quia server	display webpage; store Quickbase server	individual emails
export to delimited file: Excel, SPSS	not free		yes	yes; via cgi
record keeping	instructor ?	yes	yes	yes if you build in name, date fields
record keeping respondent	no, printout	yes; if registered	Yes, and print page	print page or email to self
tabulation built-in	yes, totals, percent; cross-tabulation with fee	yes; totals, percents, no graphs	yes; averages, totals; formulas	no (later in Excel)
sort	No (not in free version)		user, item extensive in-program capability	no (later in Excel)
view individual results	?	? think so	yes; view record	web no spreadsheet yes

MAKING: SUPPORT / FEES

help docs	?	yes very good	yes	usually good, depends on web editor
support	free somewhat; paid certainly	?	free version? paid certainly!	yes; UM supported web editor software
learning curve	low	low	low	high
ease of use	easy, but	easy	low	involved, not template
free	yes, only 10 days; 50 respondents; 20 questions; you must modify existing	no 30 day free trial	yes, one database	cost of web editor software; server space
rates	\$600/yr (less for educational rate)	\$49 / year	\$15-50/mo depending on plan	cost of web editor software; server space
advertising	?	no	no	no; unless you use commercial host

DECISION POINTS

- If you prioritize custom graphics, background, layout
- If you need non-Roman font capability
- If you prioritize automatic tabulation
- If you prioritize sorting without exporting
- If you prioritize database storage
- If you need it tomorrow
- If you need conditional logic
- If you need free multiple matrix
- If you need occasional, short-term, free
- If you need Kerberos authentication
- If you need to allow user file uploads
- If you want the data to be on your server

- Web form, FileMaker Pro, SiteMaker
- Flashlight, web form, SiteMaker, Free Online Survey (not rtl)
- Free Online Surveys, SurveyMonkey, Flashlight
- FileMaker Pro, SiteMaker, Free Online Surveys
- FileMaker Pro, SiteMaker
- Free Online Surveys, Flashlight
- SurveyMonkey
- SurveyMonkey, FileMaker Pro, SiteMaker
- SurveyMonkey
- SiteMaker, UM. Lessons
- SiteMaker, web form
- FileMaker, webform

TOOL	ADVANTAGES - STRENGTH	DISADVANTAGES - WEAKNESS
FreeOnline:	(+) create in order (+) pay per month (+) very easy creation (+) fl interfaces (+) filtering in progress	
SurveyMonkey	(+) mult axis matrix (+) skip logic (+) mult pages (+) very easy creation	
Flashlight	(+) html customization allowing fl encoding (+) very easy creation (+) question bank to evaluate instructional technology	(-) create items in blocks; reordering (-) subscription
UM.Lessons	(+) Kerberos authentication (+) question clustering (+) UM support	(-) click intensive construction
SiteMaker	(+) Kerberos authentication (+) database (+) access privileges (+) UM support (+) complete customization	(-) default two-column table layout [but customizable]
FileMakerPro		(-) non-template, learning curve (-) need server
Web form	(+) complete customization (+) non-Roman font	(-) non-template, learning curve

Sept. 14, 2007

Dr. Gary Bunt
School of Theology, Religion and Islamic Studies
University of Wales, Lampeter

Dear Dr. Bunt:

I am writing in response to the request for a written statement regarding my role in the Arab media survey that is a part of Lawrence Pintak's PhD dissertation.

Mr. Pintak and I were colleagues at the University of Michigan when he first conceptualized the survey. My primary field is political psychology, with a focus on the Middle East. As a trained survey researcher, my role was to vet Mr. Pintak's initial survey draft for methodological soundness and structure. In addition, I inserted into the survey instrument several questions on the issue of "protected values" for my own research purposes (not related to the dissertation) and helped oversee the coding process.

Mr. Pintak did all of the analysis on the data used in the dissertation and, of course, all of the writing. While we will eventually carry out some joint analysis, we, quite literally, have yet to discuss the results. Please feel free to contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,



Jeremy Ginges, Ph.D
Assistant Professor, Psychology
The New School for Social Research
65 Fifth Ave, New York, NY 10003
U.S.A
Email: gingesj@newschool.edu

APPENDIX E: CAIRO DARFUR MEDIA WORKSHOP ATTENDANCE LIST

Name	Organisation	Position	status
Speakers			
Dr. Lawrence Pintak	American University of Cairo		confirmed
Khaled Mansour	UN - WFP		confirmed
Salih Mahmoud Osman	MP		confirmed
Hassan Sati	Al-Sharq al-Awsat		confirmed
Albaqir Mukhtar			confirmed
Nadim Hasbani	International Crisis Group	Arab Media Officer	confirmed
Nabil Qassem (Visa & Tkt)	505290607	Documentary Producer	confirmed / waiting for invitation
Al Tayyeb Mustapha	Al-Intibaha	President of the Board	confirmed
Kamal Al-Gizouli	Sudanese writers union		confirmed
Al-Hajj Warag	Sudanese		confirmed
Fayez el Sheikh Saleik	Al-Hayat	Khartoum Correspondent	confirmed
Khaled Ouweis (Visa & tkt)	Al-Arabiya	Sudan Editor	confirmed
Mahmoud Tamim (Visa & tkt)	Al-Arabiya	Interview Producer	confirmed
Participants			
Zeid el Sabban	Arab League	Africa Counselor of Secretary General	
Al-Zahawi Ibrahim Malik		Sudan Minister of Information and Communication	
Ibrahim Bairam 00961 3298849 (Visa & tkt)	An Nahar lebanon	An Nahar - Lebanon - Political Analyst	confirmed
Hassan Saber Bayouni Shahein (Tkt)	Al Bayan UAE - 009714 4064208	Political Analyst	confirmed
	Gulf News UAE - 00971 50 625 1820		
Duraïd Al Baik (Tkt)		Foreign Editor	confirmed
Yehya Askar (visa & Tkt)00974 561 8732	Al Sharq - Qatar	Political Analyst	confirmed
Khalfan Salem	Al Watan- Oman	Poltical Editor	confirmed
	Ahram Center for Strategic and Political Studies		
Hassan Abu Taleb		Deputy Director	confirmed
Diala Chehade 00961 03 436 535	As Safir - Lebanon	Foreign Editor	confirmed
Lana Mahdi	Khaleej Times	Foreign Editor	Confirmed
Roland Marchal	CERI	Foreign Analyst	Confirmed
Mr Bahey Eddine Hassan	The Cairo Institute for Human Rights		confirmed
Mohammad Abdel Raouf	Arabiya		confirmed
Al Nour Ahmad Al Nour	Al Hayat	Khartoum correspondent	Confirmed
Mohamad Salah	Al Hayat	Cairo Corrspondent	confirmed
Abdel Latif el Minnawi	Al Sharq Alawsat		confirmed
Khaled Mahmoud			confirmed
Gamal Shahan			
Tahir el Mardi	Al Jazzera	Khartoum correspondent	Confirmed
Imad Abed el Hady (Visa & Tkt)	Al Jazeera	Khartoum correspondent	confirmed
Hussein Abdel Ghany	Al. Jazeera	Cairo Corrspondent	confirmed
Abdallah Hassan	MENA news Agency	Editor in Chief	confirmed
Mohamed Abdel Hady	Al Ahram	Deputy Editor in Chief	confirmed
Fahmi Howaidi			Confirmed
Abdallah Kamel	Kuwait News Agency		confirmed
Mohammed Fal	Al Jazeera	Documentary film producer	
Amira Al-Tahawi	Al Sharq al. Awsat		confirmed

Faysal Mohamed Salah	Al Adwa newspaper	Editor in Chief	confirmed
Amal Abbas	Al-Sahafa		confirmed
Raja el Abbassi			Declined
Ibrahim Mohammed Ishaq		Journalist	Awaiting response
Lana Mahdi		Journalist	Declined
Tarek el Gazouli	sudaneseonline.com	Editor-in-chief	confirmed
Hala Abdelhalim		Democratic New Forces Movement	confirmed
Dr. Mohammed Suleiman		write on Darfur	
Mohammed al Hassan Ahmed	Al Sharq al Awsat	Columnist / Analyst	
Hassan Zenati	AFP France	Cairo Correspondent	Confirmed
Alain Navarro	AFP France	Cairo Correspondent	Declined
Neil Mac Farcuhar	New York Times	Cairo Correspondent	Declined
Edmund Blair	Reuters	Cairo Correspondent	Declined
Donna Bryson	Associated Press	Cairo Correspondent	Declined
Earleen Fisher	Associated Press	Cairo Correspondent	Declined
EGYPT			
Gomaa Hamadnallah	Al Ahram	Political Editor	Confirmed
Mohamed Barakat	Al Akhbar	Political Editor	Confirmed
Shaimaa Abdelhadi	Al Masry Al Youm	Political Editor	Confirmed
Jamal Nekroma	Ahram Weekly	Political Editor	Confirmed
Magdy Helmy	Al Wafd	Political Editor	Confirmed
Ragab AbdelAziz	Al Gomhuriah	Desk on Politics	Confirmed
Najwa Awad	El Adwaa	Political Editor	Confirmed
Ammar Fatth Al Rahman	El Wehda El Sodaneya	Representative Journalist	Confirmed
	El Haya El Landaneya	Representative Journalist	Confirmed
Khaled Mohamed Ali	El Eosboa		Confirmed
Rashad Kamel	Sabah el Khair		Confirmed
Hamdy Rizk	Akher Saaa	Political Editor	Confirmed
Sausan Abu Husien	Al Mussawar	Political Editor	Confirmed
Prof Ibrahim El Nur	AUC		Declined
Sara Hamood	Ford Foundation Cairo	Consultant, Darfur Initiative	Declined

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENT

Lawrence Pintak is a veteran of 30 years in journalism and the media business on four continents who now writes and lectures on America's relationship with the Muslim world and the role of the media in shaping global perceptions. He is director of the Kamal Adham Center for Journalism Training and Research at The American University in Cairo and publisher/co-editor of *Arab Media & Society*. He previously held the chair as Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor of Journalism at the University of Michigan. Pintak's most recent book is *Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens: America, Islam & the War of Ideas*, which *Middle East Journal* called "one of the best examples of contemporary journalism." Pintak has reported from six continents for many of the world's leading news organizations. He covered the Lebanon conflict, the Iran-Iraq War and the birth of modern radical Islamist terrorism as CBS News Middle East correspondent in the 1980s.

He was based in Indonesia in the 1990s, where he reported on the overthrow of Indonesian President Suharto for The San Francisco Chronicle and ABC News. Pintak won two Overseas Press Club awards for his Middle East coverage, was twice nominated for Emmys and has contributed to many of the world's leading news organizations. His op-eds appear in *The Daily Star* (Beirut and Cairo), *Gulf News*, *Tempo* (Indonesia), *The Jakarta Post*, *Arab News*, the *Turkish Daily News* and other newspapers in the Middle East and Muslim world, along with the *International Herald Tribune*, *The Washington Post*, *Columbia Journalism Review*, *CommonDreams.org* and a variety of US and European outlets. He is a regular commentator for the Al-Jazeera English media program *Listening Post* and he is frequently interviewed by the BBC, National Public Radio, Australian Broadcasting Corporation and many others.

Pintak has also written extensively on Buddhism and Eastern religion. He holds an M.Phil in Islamic Studies from the University of Wales, Lampeter.

ENDNOTES

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- ¹⁷ Benedict R. O'G Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
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- ¹⁹ Pamela J. Shoemaker and Stephen D. Reese, *Mediating the Message: Theories of Influences on Mass Media Content*, 2nd ed. (New York: Longman, 1996).
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former president of the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) and Joel Beinin, another past president of MESA and director of Middle East Studies at Stanford University and The American University in Cairo.

⁸⁸ Charles Smith, "'Imagined Identities, Imagined Nationalisms: Print Culture and Egyptian Nationalism in Light of Recent Scholarship.'" A Review Essay of Israel Gershoni and James P. Jankowski, *Redefining the Egyptian Nation, 1930-1945*, *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29 (1997). 607-608. Smith goes on to write, "[N]one of these works, with the exception of Bassam Tibi's, concerns itself with theories of nationalism or with the related topic of state formation and the historical and social science literature pertaining to these subjects."

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⁹⁰ Rashid Khalidi, "Arab Nationalism: Problems in the Literature," *The American Historical Review* 96, no. 5 (1991). 1364.

⁹¹ Albert Habib Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber and Faber, 1991), Bassam Tibi, *Arab Nationalism : Between Islam and the Nation-State*, 3rd ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1997), Hisham Sharabi, *Nationalism and Revolution in the Arab World (the Middle East and North Africa)* (Princeton, N.J.: Van Nostrand, 1966), Kedourie, *Nationalism*.

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¹⁰⁸ Ibid. 65, and Esther Ende Peskes, W. , "Wahhābiyya," in *The Encyclopaedia of Islam – Online Edition*, ed. E. J. van Donzel, et al. (Leiden ; Boston: Brill, 2008).

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⁸⁴³ Samir Khader, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Nov 9, 2005).

⁸⁴⁴ Rashid Khashana, "Conversation with the Author." (The Dead Sea: Nov, 2005).

⁸⁴⁵ Matt Rees. *Mohammed Al-Durra.* (Time), Dec 25, 2000 [accessed Mar 3, 2007] available from http://www.time.com/time/pacific/magazine/20001225/poy_mohammed.html.

⁸⁴⁶ Lynch.

⁸⁴⁷ Hanna Ziadeh, "In Defence of National Television: A Personal Account of Eclectic Lebanese Media Affinities." *Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2005). 321.

⁸⁴⁸ *Twenty-One Years of Achievements*. (Egypt State Information Service), Dec, 2005 [accessed Apr 25, 2006] available from <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Pub/achievements/tweentyoneyears/110301000000000008.htm>.

⁸⁴⁹ "Election Offers Public Debate, Not Free Choice." (Washington, D.C.: Human Rights Watch, Sep 2, 2005).

⁸⁵⁰ Gross. 171.

⁸⁵¹ Marc Lynch, "Reality Is Not Enough: The Politics of Arab Reality TV." *Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2005). 37.

⁸⁵² "Vision and Mission." (Doha: Al-Jazeera).

⁸⁵³ Giselle Khouri, "Conversation with the Author." (Istanbul: Nov 3, 2006).

⁸⁵⁴ Kai Hafez, "Arab Satellite Broadcasting: Democracy without Political Parties?" *Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2005).

⁸⁵⁵ Mohammed al-Gamsha, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2005).

⁸⁵⁶ Ziadeh. 317.

⁸⁵⁷ Giselle Khouri.

⁸⁵⁸ Lawrence Pintak, *Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens: America, Islam & the War of Ideas*. (London & Ann Arbor: Pluto Books, 2005).

⁸⁵⁹ Nabil H. Dajani, "Re-Feudalization of the Public Sphere." *Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 2, no. 1 (2006).

⁸⁶⁰ Dajani.

⁸⁶¹ Ziadeh. 321-22.

⁸⁶² Jaber Obeid, "Comments at Arab Broadcast Forum." (Abu Dhabi: June 4, 2006).

⁸⁶³ Nabil Khatib, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 7, 2005).

⁸⁶⁴ Abd el-Latif el-Menawy, "Comments at Arab Broadcast Forum." (Abu Dhabi: June 4, 2006).

⁸⁶⁵ Hussein Jamal, "Comments at Arab Broadcast Forum." (Abu Dhabi: June 4, 2006).

⁸⁶⁶ Tarek Abdel-Gaber, "Public Comments at Journalism & American Cinema Film Fest." (American University in Cairo: Prince Alwaleed Bin Talal Bin Abdulaziz Alsaud Center for American Studies & Research, Apr 15, 2006).

⁸⁶⁷ Bassim Abu Samaya, "Comments at Arab Broadcast Forum." (Abu Dhabi: June 4, 2006).

⁸⁶⁸ Khader.

⁸⁶⁹ Aref Hijawi, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Feb 1, 2006).

⁸⁷⁰ *Saudi Arabia Al-Qa'ida Critic Arrested for 'Destructive Thoughts'*. (Human Rights Watch), Apr 12, 2006 [accessed Apr 12, 2006] available from <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/04/12/saudia13161.htm>.

⁸⁷¹ Human Rights Watch.

⁸⁷² "No Rules, No Limits: Sexual Assaults and Fabrication of Cases against Journalists and Activists, Tunisia, Egypt, and Bahrain." (Cairo: Arab Network for Human Rights information, Apr 9, 2006).

⁸⁷³ Hijawi.

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⁸⁷⁵ Robert Greenwald et al., *Outfoxed Rupert Murdoch's War on Journalism*. (New York, NY: www.outfoxed.org; Distributed by The Disinformation Company, 2004), videorecording.

⁸⁷⁶ Greenwald et al.

⁸⁷⁷ Lynch. *Assessing*.

⁸⁷⁸ Andrew Hoskins, *Televising War: From Vietnam to Iraq*. (London ; New York: Continuum, 2004). 144.

⁸⁷⁹ Bandar bin Khalid al-Faisal, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 6, 2005).

⁸⁸⁰ Based on the author's firsthand observations of the decision-making process at Al-Jazeera.

⁸⁸¹ Unnamed source, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Oct 7, 2005).

⁸⁸² "Khanfar's Removal from Al-Jazeera Board of Directors Preliminary Step Towards Removal as Director General." (Jul 29, 2007). The move followed the publication of a series of articles attacking Khanfar's management style, which were published in a leading Qatari newspaper. Recognizing that such an assault would not be published with official sanction, Khanfar submitted his resignation from the company, according to Al-Jazeera sources. That was rejected, but his ability to act independently was severely curtailed.

⁸⁸³ George Galloway, "The Threat to Al-Jazeera," *Guardian*, <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/story/0,,2103785,00.html>.

⁸⁸⁴ Lisa Schnellinger and Mohannad Khatib, *Fighting Words: How Arab and American Journalists Can Break through to Better Coverage* (Washington, D.C.: International Center for Journalists, 2006).15.

⁸⁸⁵ Khatib.

⁸⁸⁶ Arab Broadcast Forum, *Author's Contemporaneous Notes*, Apr 29, 2007.

⁸⁸⁷ Badrakhan.

⁸⁸⁸ Hussein Shobokshi, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2005).

⁸⁸⁹ John Kifner, "Bomb Wounds Lebanese Linked to Assassination Inquiry." *The New York Times*, Sep 5, 2006.

⁸⁹⁰ Sakr, *Arab Television Today*. 199-201.

⁸⁹¹ Kovach and Rosenstiel. 13.

⁸⁹² For example, see Masha Gessen, "Fear and Self-Censorship in Vladimir Putin's Russia." *Nieman Reports*, 59, no. 2.

⁸⁹³ Elizabeth Fox and Silvio R. Waisbord, *Latin Politics, Global Media*. 1st ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002). xxii.

⁸⁹⁴ Abu Samaya.

⁸⁹⁵ Michel Murr, "Conversation with the Author." (Beirut: Oct 2, 2005).

⁸⁹⁶ Susan Postlewaite. *Al-Arabiya Versus Al-Jazeera*. (Business Monthly), March, 2003 [accessed Sep 8, 2006] available from <http://www.cairolive.com/newcairolive/critic/arabiya.html>.

⁸⁹⁷ Khatib.

⁸⁹⁸ Mark Lynch, email to the author, Aug 18, 2006 and Lawrence Pintak. *Look Who's Fair and Balanced*. (Columbia Journalism Review Daily), Aug 22, 2006 [accessed Aug 23, 2006] available from http://www.cjrdaily.org/behind_the_news/look_whos_fair_and_balanced.php.

⁸⁹⁹ *Media Sustainability Index -- Middle East and North Africa* ed. Theo Dolan and Mark Whitehouse (Washington, D.C.: IREX, 2006). ix-x.

⁹⁰⁰ Khatib.

⁹⁰¹ Ibid.

⁹⁰² Ghassan Tueni, "Conversation with the Author." (Beirut: Oct 6, 2005).

⁹⁰³ Charles Levinson, "Plus Ca Change." *Journal of Transnational Broadcasting Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2005). 223.

⁹⁰⁴ Mahmoud Abdulhadi, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Nov 7, 2005).

⁹⁰⁵ Rami Khouri. *Arab Reform, a Boxer in between Rounds*. (The Daily Star), Apr 12, 2006 [accessed Apr 28, 2006] available from http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_ID=10&article_ID=23663&categ_id=5.

⁹⁰⁶ Tom Fenton, *Bad News : The Decline of Reporting, the Business of News, and the Danger to Us All*. 1st ed. (New York, NY: Regan Books, 2005).

⁹⁰⁷ Hoskins. 113.

⁹⁰⁸ Michael Young. *Kicking Off a New Era of Bad Feelings*. (The Daily Star), Apr 20, 2006 [accessed Apr 28, 2006] available from http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_ID=10&article_ID=23833&categ_id=5.

⁹⁰⁹ Elias Khouri, *Gate of the Sun*, trans. Humphrey T. Davies, 1st ed. (New York: Picador, 2006). 277.

⁹¹⁰ Jim VandeHei, "In Break with U.N., Bush Calls Sudan Killings Genocide," *The Washington Post*, Jun 2 2005.

⁹¹¹ A total of 51 Arab journalists from Egypt, Sudan and the Gulf were invited to the event, along with 11 representatives of NGOs, international donors, and think tanks, five foreign correspondents and the Sudanese minister of information. A total of 49 Arab journalists attended, along with 10 of the other group. The foreign correspondents and Sudanese minister all declined. See Appendix

⁹¹² The Arab Broadcast Forum 2007, was attended by approximately 280 delegates from the Arab broadcast media and representatives of international media. These included the top news executives from Al-Jazeera, Al-Arabiya, LBC, Reuters Television Middle East, Abu Dhabi TV, Associated Press Television News Middle East, the Egypt Radio and Television Union, Palestine News Network, and Deutsche Welle Arabic service. The Darfur session took place on April 30. Details on the conference can be found at <http://www.abfonline.net/en/abf2007.aspx>.

⁹¹³ All quotes from the author's contemporaneous notes taken at the event, co-sponsored by the International Crisis Group and the Center for Electronic Journalism at The American University in Cairo, Apr 19, 2007.

⁹¹⁴ All quotes from author's contemporaneous notes, Abu Dhabi, Apr 29, 2007.

⁹¹⁵ Arab and Muslim Public Opinion Takes the Lead on Darfur (Arab American Institute and Zogby International), Apr 30, 2007 [cited May 4, 2007] available from <http://www.aaiusa.org/issues/2965/arab-and-muslim-public-opinion-takes-the-lead-on-darfur>.

⁹¹⁶ Shoemaker and Reese, *Mediating the Message*. 268.

⁹¹⁷ Ibid. 265.

⁹¹⁸ Ibid.

⁹¹⁹ Noha Mellor, *The Making of Arab News*. 11.

⁹²⁰ David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist in the 1990s: US News People at the End of an Era*. (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum, 1996), David H. Weaver and G. Cleveland Wilhoit, *The American Journalist: A Portrait of US News People and Their Work*. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986). As the survey was being administered, the latest in the series was published: David H. Weaver, *The American Journalist in the 21st Century: US News People at the Dawn of a New Millennium*. *Lea's Communication Series* (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2007).

⁹²¹ The final six questions were designed to test the psychological concept of "protected values" for a separate study and will not be analyzed as part of this dissertation.

⁹²² The countries included Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon, Syria, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Yemen, and Morocco. See Appendix 5 for distribution of responses.

⁹²³ S. Robert Lichter, Stanley Rothman, and Linda S. Lichter, *The Media Elite*. 1st ed. (Bethesda, Md.: Adler & Adler, 1986). 41.

⁹²⁴ Weaver and Wilhoit, *American Journalist in the 1990s*.

⁹²⁵ "The State of the News Media 2004." (Washington, D.C.: Center for Excellence in Journalism, 2004).

⁹²⁶ Stephen Hess, *The Washington Reporters*. *Newswork* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution, 1981).

⁹²⁷ John Zogby and James J. Zogby, "Impressions of America 2004." (Washington, D.C.: The Arab American Institute/Zogby International, Jul 22, 2004).

⁹²⁸ Frank Newport, "Gallup Poll of the Islamic World." (Princeton, N.J.: The Gallup Organization, 2002).

⁹²⁹ Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris, "The True Clash of Civilizations." *Foreign Policy*, no. 135.

⁹³⁰ Mansoor Moaddel, "In Search of a Sociopolitical Community: The Cases of Egypt, Iran, and Jordan." (Eastern Michigan University, 2000).

⁹³¹ Jyotika Ramaprasad, "A Profile of Journalists in Post-Independence Tanzania." *Gazette*, 63, no. 6 (2001).

⁹³² Jyotika Ramaprasad and James D Kelly, "Reporting the News from the World's Rooftop." *Gazette*, 65, no. 3 (2003).

⁹³³ Jyotika Ramaprasad and Shafiqur Rahman, "Tradition with a Twist: A Survey of Bangladeshi Journalists." *International Communication Gazette*, 68, no. 2 (2006).

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- ⁹³⁵ Janet Steele, *Wars Within: The Story of Tempo, an Independent Magazine in Soeharto's Indonesia*. (Jakarta, Singapore: Equinox Pub.; Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2005).
- ⁹³⁶ Thomas Hanitzsch, "Journalists in Indonesia: Educated but Timid Watchdogs." *Journalism Studies*, 6, no. 4 (2005).
- ⁹³⁷ Jyotika Ramaprasad and Naila Nabil Hamdy, "Functions of Egyptian Journalists: Perceived Importance and Actual Performance." *International Communication Gazette*, 68, no. 2 (2006).
- ⁹³⁸ Tom Buchanan et al., "Nonequivalence of on-Line and Paper-and-Pencil Psychological Tests: The Case of the Prospective Memory Questionnaire." *Behavior Research Methods*, 37, no. 1 (2005).
- ⁹³⁹ Robert Kraut et al., "Psychological Research Online: Report of Board of Scientific Affairs' Advisory Group on the Conduct of Research on the Internet." *The American Psychologist*, 59, no. 2.
- ⁹⁴⁰ J. Epstein and W.D. Klinkenberg, "From Eliza to Internet: A Brief History of Computerized Assessment." *Computers in Human Behavior*, 17 (2001). 310.
- ⁹⁴¹ *State of the News Media: Methodology*. (Project on Excellence in Journalism), 2007 [accessed Mar 15, 2007] available from http://www.stateofthenewsmedia.com/2007/journalist_survey_methodology.asp.
- ⁹⁴² James S. L. Yong, *E-Government in Asia : Enabling Public Service Innovation in the 21st Century*. (Singapore: Times Media Pte Ltd., 2003).
- ⁹⁴³ Luc Christiaensen, John Hoddinott, and Gilles Bergeron, "Comparing Village Characteristics Derived from Rapid Appraisals and Household Surveys: A Tale from Northern Mali." *The Journal of Development Studies*, 37, no. 3.
- ⁹⁴⁴ William Rehg, "Solidarity and the Common Good: An Analytic Framework." *Journal of Social Philosophy*, 38, no. 1 %R doi:10.1111/j.1467-9833.2007.00363.x (2007).
- ⁹⁴⁵ Earl R. Babbie, *Survey Research Methods*. 2nd ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth Pub. Co., 1990).
- ⁹⁴⁶ Such as mosque attendance and frequency of prayer.
- ⁹⁴⁷ Nouredine Fridhi, "Conversation with the Author." (The Dead Sea: Nov, 2005).
- ⁹⁴⁸ See Ami Ayalon, *The Press in the Arab Middle East : A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995). And Farouk Abu Zeid, *Arab Emigre Press* (Cairo: Alam Al Kotub, 1993).
- ⁹⁴⁹ Bill Kovach and Tom Rosenstiel, *The Elements of Journalism*. (London: Published by Atlantic Books on behalf of Guardian Newspapers Ltd., 2003). 10.
- ⁹⁵⁰ James Carey of Columbia University quoted in Kovach and Rosenstiel. 11.
- ⁹⁵¹ Weaver, *The American Journalist in the 21st Century*. 256.
- ⁹⁵² The aim of Islamonline.net is to "present the unified and lively nature of Islam." Its "goals" include "To work for the good of humanity, as Islam teaches us," and "To work to uplift the Islamic nation specifically and humanity in general." (<http://www.islamonline.net/English/AboutUs.shtml>). Al-Manar's website says the channel "assumes objective policy motivated by the ambitions of participation in building better future for the Arab and Muslim generations by focusing on the tolerant values of Islam and promoting the culture of dialogue and cooperation among the followers of the Heavenly religions and

human civilizations. It focuses on highlighting the value of the human being as the center of the Godly messages which endeavor to save his dignity and freedom and develop the spiritual and moral dimensions of his personality"

(<http://www.almanar.com.lb/newssite/AboutUs.aspx?language=en>).

⁹⁵³ *Media Sustainability Index – Middle East and North Africa* ed. Theo Dolan and Mark Whitehouse (Washington, D.C.: IREX, 2006). xi.

⁹⁵⁴ *Most Americans Say Bloggers and Citizen Reporters Will Play a Vital Role in Journalism's Future*. (IFOCOS/Zogby International), Feb 15, 2007 [accessed Feb 15, 2007] available from <http://ifocos.org/2007/02/15/we-media-%e2%80%93zogby-poll-most-americans-say-bloggers-and-citizen-reporters-will-play-a-vital-role-in-journalisms-future/>.

⁹⁵⁵ See, for example, J.L.H. Bardoel, "Beyond Journalism: A Profession between Information Society and Civil Society." *European Journal of Communication*, 11 (1996), Mark Deuze. *Understanding the Impact of the Internet on New Media Professionalism, Mindsets and Buzzwords*. (EJournalist), 2001 [accessed Aug 8, 2006] available from <http://www.ejournalism.au.com/ejournalist/deuze.pdf>, Thomas J. Johnson and Barbara K. Kaye, "Wag the Blog: How Reliance on Traditional Media and the Internet Influence Credibility Perceptions of Weblogs among Blog Users." *Journalism and Mass Communication Quarterly*, 81, no. 3 (2004), John Pavlik, "The Impact of Technology on Journalism." *Journalism Studies*, 1, no. 2 (2000), Nicholas Stein, "New Media, Old Values." *Columbia Journalism Review*, 38, no. 2.

⁹⁵⁶ Interview with the author taped Feb 13, 2007 for an audio program to run on the website of Arab Media & Society (www.arabmediasociety.org).

⁹⁵⁷ *Internet in the Arab World* (Feb 19, 2007 [accessed PR III.4] available from http://www.layalina.tv/press/PR_III.4.asp#article3.

⁹⁵⁸ "Implacable Adversaries: Arab Governments and the Internet." (Cairo: The Initiative for an Open Arab Internet, Dec 16, 2006).

⁹⁵⁹ "Call for the Release of Michel Kilo, Now Held for More Than Nine Months." (Paris: Reporters sans Frontières, Feb 16, 2007).

⁹⁶⁰ Conversation with a group of Syrian online journalist, Mar 7, 2007, Cairo.

⁹⁶¹ Ayman Nour, "Conversation with the Author." (Cairo: Mar 7, 2007).

⁹⁶² *Newsroom Barometer: Nobody "Killed the Newspaper"*. (World Association of Newspapers), Mar 27, 2007 [accessed Mar 28, 2007] available from http://www.editorsweblog.org/analysis//2007/03/1_for_the_first_newsroom_barometer_nobod.php#more.

⁹⁶³ *State of the News Media: Methodology*.

⁹⁶⁴ Weaver, *The American Journalist in the 21st Century*. 2.

⁹⁶⁵ *Ibid.* 257.

⁹⁶⁶ Egypt's population is 72.8 million. Total Arab population is 280 million. Egypt has 493 media outlets, including 16 dailies. Total media outlets in the Arab world is approximately 2,200. Egyptian Journalist Syndicate figures obtained directly from the Supreme Press Council. All journalists working on media registered in Egypt must be members. Those working for publications registered abroad but distributed in Egypt are unofficially barred from membership. Media outlet data from Theo Dolan and Mark Whitehouse, "Media Sustainability Index – Middle

East and North Africa " (Washington, D.C.: IREX, 2006). Population data from, "Arab Human Development Report," (New York: UNDP, 2005).

⁹⁶⁷ Joseph E Phelps et al., "Viral Marketing or Electronic World-of-Mouth Advertising." *Journal of Advertising Research*, 44, no. 4 (2004). William Powell, "@Work." *T+D*, 56, no. 3 (2002). "Viral Marketing: PR Ain't in the Name, but It's in the Fundamentals." *PR News*, 57, no. 4 (2002).

⁹⁶⁸ The figure does not take into account viral effects or outcome of requests to several editors in Saudi Arabia and the Gulf who were also requested to distribute the link.

⁹⁶⁹ *Media Sustainability Index. Worldwide Press Freedom Index 2006: Middle East Index*. (Reporters sans Frontières), Oct 23, 2006 [accessed Feb 3, 2007] available from http://www.rsf.org/IMG/pdf/cm2006_mo-2.pdf. *Freedom of the Press: Middle East and North Africa*. (Freedom House), 2006 [accessed Sept 30, 2006] available from <http://www.freedomhouse.org/template.cfm?page=251&year=2006>.

⁹⁷⁰ The candidate offered to provide him with a letter of representation from The American University in Cairo, but the researcher was told by a top editor at a government paper that he would only accept an authorization from the Egyptian Ministry of Information addressed to the Syrian Ministry of Information.

⁹⁷¹ The candidate did not know of these incidents until after the survey was complete. He had several times cautioned the Syrian and other research assistants not to endanger themselves.

⁹⁷² Usama Najeeb, "Memo to the Author." (Cairo: Jan 29, 2007). The Rockefeller Brothers Fund is mentioned in the survey introduction as providing partial financing for the project.

⁹⁷³ Ibid.

⁹⁷⁴ Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, *Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Materials*. 2nd ed. (Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage, 2003).

⁹⁷⁵ Richard Newbold Adams and Jack Joseph Preiss, *Human Organization Research; Field Relations and Techniques*. (Homewood, Ill.: Published for the Society for Applied Anthropology by the Dorsey Press, 1960). John Lofland and Lyn H. Lofland, *Analyzing Social Settings: A Guide to Qualitative Observation and Analysis*. 3rd ed. (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 1995). James P. Spradley, *The Ethnographic Interview*. (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1979).

⁹⁷⁶ Rochelle Mahoe. *Reflections on the Dissertation Process and the Use of Secondary Data*. ([accessed Oct 23, 2005] available from www.hawaii.edu/edper/pdf/Vol37Iss2/Reflections.pdf.

⁹⁷⁷ Ibn Khaldun and Franz Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah : An Introduction to History*, 2d ed., 3 vols., Bollingen Series (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1967). 250.

⁹⁷⁸ Anecdotal evidence from data collectors indicates that many of these were camera persons or others working in the newsroom who did not literally fit the other categories, such as television news writers.

⁹⁷⁹ All charts based on percentages.

⁹⁸⁰ "Vision and Mission." (Doha: Al-Jazeera, Jan 2006).

⁹⁸¹ *Al-Arabiya News Channel*. (Al-Arabiya), 2005 [accessed Dec 31, 2006] available from <http://www.alarabiya.net/english.htm>.

⁹⁸² "Author's Contemporaneous Notes." (Al-Jazeera Forum, Doha: Jan 31, 2006).

⁹⁸³ Osama Mirghani, "Conversation with the Author." (London: May 19, 2005).

⁹⁸⁴ "Author's Contemporaneous Notes." (Arab and World Media Conference, Dubai: Dec 5-6, 2005).

⁹⁸⁵ Lebanon was the one exception, though its media was subject to pressures from other Arab governments.

⁹⁸⁶ William A. Rugh, *Arab Mass Media: Newspapers, Radio, and Television in Arab Politics*. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004). 16.

⁹⁸⁷ "Code of Ethics." (Doha: Al-Jazeera, Jan, 2006).

⁹⁸⁸ Quoted in Ayalon, "Sihafa: The Arab Experiment in Journalism." 268.

⁹⁸⁹ "Author's Notes, Arab and World Media Conference."

⁹⁹⁰ Ibid.

⁹⁹¹ Khaled al-Maenna, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2005).

⁹⁹² Roger Cohen, "Europe Can Take Pride in Defending Cartoons." *The New York Times*, Feb 11, 2006.

⁹⁹³ Prince Bandar bin Khaled alFaisal, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 6, 2005).

⁹⁹⁴ *Al-Jazeera Emphasizes Respect for Iraq's Sistani*. (Fars News Agency), May 26, 2007 [accessed Jun 19, 2007] available from <http://english.farsnews.com/newstext.php?nn=8602200162>.

⁹⁹⁵ *Unethical Media Practices Revealed by IPRA Report*. (International Public Relations Association), July 14, 2002 [accessed <http://www.prfirms.org/resources/research/media.asp>].

⁹⁹⁶ *Seminar Discusses Poll Coverage in Arab World* (The Peninsula), May 18, 2007 [accessed May 26, 2007] available from http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=Local_News&subsection=Qatar+News&month=May2007&file=Local_News2007051875824.xml.

⁹⁹⁷ *Media Sustainability Index – Middle East and North Africa* ed. Theo Dolan and Mark Whitehouse (Washington, D.C.: IREX, 2006). 24.

⁹⁹⁸ Ibid.

⁹⁹⁹ Magdy Samaan, "Conversation with the Author." (Cairo: Oct 13, 2005).

¹⁰⁰⁰ Somayya Jabarti, "Conversation with the Author." (Jeddah: Apr 22, 2007).

¹⁰⁰¹ *A Gift for an Article*. (Arab Press Network), Apr 12, 2007 [accessed Apr 14, 2007] available from <http://www.arabpressnetwork.org/articles.php?id=1013>.

¹⁰⁰² Op Cit, *Conversation*.

¹⁰⁰³ Abdel Bari Atwan, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Feb 2, 2006).

¹⁰⁰⁴ William A. Rugh, *The Arab Press: News Media and Political Process in the Arab World*. (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1979). 6, 12-13.

¹⁰⁰⁵ For a complete discussion of this media effect in the Arab context, see Pintak, *Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens*.

¹⁰⁰⁶ Israel was consciously left off the list of threats in order to better assess journalist prioritization of other issues.

¹⁰⁰⁷ *A Major Change of Public Opinion in the Muslim World*. (Terror Free Tomorrow), Jan 24, 2005 [accessed Apr 22, 2005] available from <http://www.terrorfreetomorrow.org/articlenav.php?id=40>.

¹⁰⁰⁸ Jim VandeHei, "Bush Says Tsunami Aid Benefits US" *The Washington Post*, Mar 9, 2005.

¹⁰⁰⁹ Karen Hughes, "The Diplomacy of Deeds." *Washington Times*, Dec 17, 2006.

¹⁰¹⁰ John Brown. *Loud Actions That Speak Wrongly*. (TomPaine.com), Apr 9, 2007 [accessed Apr 10, 2007] available from http://www.tompaine.com/articles/2007/04/09/loud_actions_that_speak_wrongly.php.

¹⁰¹¹ "Bahraini Press Complains About Islamic Distortion [of Their Image]," (Beirut: Mideastwire.com, 2006).

¹⁰¹² Othman Mahmoud al-Sini, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2006).

¹⁰¹³ Hassan Ibrahim, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Nov 9, 2005).

¹⁰¹⁴ Khaldun and Rosenthal, *The Muqaddimah : An Introduction to History*. 261.

¹⁰¹⁵ William A. Rugh, *Arab Mass Media: Newspapers, Radio, and Television in Arab Politics*. (Westport, Conn.: Praeger, 2004). 7.

¹⁰¹⁶ For more on this, see Pintak, *Reflections in a Bloodshot Lens*, 72-74.

¹⁰¹⁷ As of this writing, Al-Jazeera staffers are still banned from both Iraq and Saudi Arabia, among other countries.

¹⁰¹⁸ Samar Fatany. *Journalists Face Challenges Preserving Watchdog Role* (Arab News), Feb 12, 2007 [accessed Mar 5, 2007] available from <http://www.arabnews.com/?page=7§ion=0&article=92074&d=12&m=2&y=2007>.

¹⁰¹⁹ Canel and Pique, "Journalists in Emerging Democracies: The Case of Spain." 316-317.

¹⁰²⁰ See notes 818 and 819 above.

¹⁰²¹ Faisal Kasim, "Humanizing the Arab Media." *Middle East Broadcasters Journal*, no. Nov/Dec (2005).

¹⁰²² Rugh, *Arab Mass Media*.

¹⁰²³ David H. Weaver, *The American Journalist in the 21st Century: US News People at the Dawn of a New Millennium*. *Lea's Communication Series* (Mahwah, N.J.: L. Erlbaum Associates, 2007). 141-145.

¹⁰²⁴ See Jyotika Ramaprasad, "A Profile of Journalists in Post-Independence Tanzania." *Gazette*, 63, no. 6 (2001), Jyotika Ramaprasad and Naila Nabil Hamdy, "Functions of Egyptian Journalists: Perceived Importance and Actual Performance." *International Communication Gazette*, 68, no. 2 (2006), Jyotika Ramaprasad and James D Kelly, "Reporting the News from the World's Rooftop." *Gazette*, 65, no. 3 (2003), Jyotika Ramaprasad and Shafiqur Rahman, "Tradition with a Twist: A Survey of Bangladeshi Journalists." *International Communication Gazette*, 68, no. 2 (2006).

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¹⁰²⁷ The term "educate" does not, in and of itself, imply an activist agenda, but given the context of the other responses, it is valid to interpret it to mean educate the public to facilitate political change, thus it is, in the Arab context, closely associated with this category.

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- 1034 Shobokshi, "Conversation with the Author."
- 1035 Hassan Ibrahim, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Nov 9, 2005).
- 1036 Kasim, "Humanizing the Arab Media."
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- 1038 Khader, "Conversation with the Author."
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- 1040 Nabil Khatib, "Conversation with the Author," (Dubai: 2005).
- 1041 Ahmed Mansour, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Feb 1, 2006).
- 1042 Ibrahim, "Conversation with the Author."
- 1043 Ghassan Tueni, "Conversation with the Author." (Beirut: Oct 6, 2005).
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- 1045 Samar Fatany, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 6, 2005).
- 1046 Mazen Ibrahim, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Feb 1, 2006).
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- 1048 Mohammed al Amin Wael Hegazy, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2005).
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- 1050 Fatany, "Conversation with the Author."
- 1051 Deuze, "What Is Journalism?." 455.
- 1052 Ibrahim Hamidi, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 6, 2005).
- 1053 Magdy Samaan, "Conversation with the Author." (Cairo: Oct 13, 2005).
- 1054 Othman Mahmoud al-Sini, "Conversation with the Author." (Dubai: Dec 5, 2006).
- 1055 Mansour, "Conversation with the Author."
- 1056 Ibrahim, "Conversation with the Author."
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- 1058 M'Hamed Krichen, "Conversation with the Author." (Doha: Nov 9, 2005).

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¹⁰⁷² Reese, "Understanding the Global Journalist." 183.

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